



2d artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting
Magazine - Issue 062 February 2011

Interview
Serge Birault



Articles

Sketchbook of **Dimitar Tzvetanov**



The Gallery

Songnan Li, Amenov Vitaliy and
Steve Jung, plus more!



THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ART

JESSE VAN DIJK EXPLAINS THE
IMPORTANCE OF USING COLOR
AND LIGHT

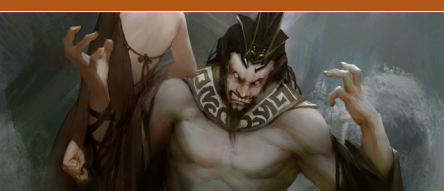
Portraiture

We resume the **Portraiture** series with **Richard Tilbury** showing us how to paint a young boy, his subject matter is his son Gabriel.



Painting Creatures From Folklore

Jason Wei Che Juan brings us the final chapter of our **Painting Creatures From Folklore** series.



Photoreal Fantasy

This month **Richard Tilbury** continues our **Photoreal fantasy** series by tackling a photoreal giant.





Editorial

Hello and welcome to the February issue of 2Dartist. I hope that 2011 has been an artistic year for you so far. Also a very happy Chinese New Year to our Chinese readers, I hope you have a great year of the Rabbit.

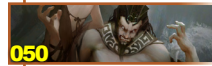
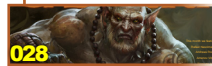
This month's issue is massive, it's epic. You could maybe even say

it was GIANT! Forgive my abstract link to our tutorials this month, but we continue our Photo Real fantasy series by tackling a photo real giant with **Richard Tilbury**. Rich talks a lot about the design and idea behind his image and by giving it a story makes it appear a lot more believable and realistic. Rich is a pro when it comes to integrating photo's to a digital painting, and gives us master class as to how to do this and make it look real. Rich has a double bill in this month's issue and also handles our portrait tutorial. In this issue Rich shows us how to paint a boy and his subject matter is his son Gabriel.

Another outstanding tutorial this month is by **Jesse van Dijk**. We have been asking seasoned industry professionals to guide us through the core subjects that any artist needs to appreciate, and this month Jesse shows us ways to portray and use light and color to accentuate the message in our image, and really drive home its entire concept. Jesse shows us how to do this by using examples from his portfolio which is fantastic. A big thanks goes to Jesse for shedding light on the matter (sorry I couldn't resist).

This month's issue contains the final chapter of our Creatures from Folklore series. We will be sad to see the series come to an end as the tutorials have been great, but we do wrap things off in the best way possible with another fantastic tutorial. **Jason Wei Che Juan** doesn't only show us how he painted his image but gives us an insight into Chinese folklore. When he told me he wanted to paint a Huli Jing, I thought to myself "a what!" but after a brief lesson in Chinese culture and folklore I knew what he meant, and you will as well once you have read his practical and educational tutorial.

I managed to catch up with **Serge Birault** for this month's issue. For those of you who are regular readers of 2Dartist you will know who I mean as he is a regular in our galleries. Serge is Pin-up royalty and has blown us away for years with his realistic paintings and fantastic character portrayals. If you are impressed by Serge's images watch this space as soon he will be doing a Pin-up series for our magazine.



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Chris Perrins	Jo Hargreaves		

I am swiftly running out of space so I will speed up and just let you know about the cool technique used by **Yuehui Tang** in this month's Making Of. He uses gray scale but backwards, sound weird? Check it out to see what I mean. This month's issue also contains a sketchbook by **Dimitar Tzvetanov** and gallery images by **Steve Jung**, **Andreas Rocha**, **Claire Beard** and many more. Anyway, don't take my word for it, read on and check it out!



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For optimum viewing of the magazine it is recommended that you have the latest Acrobat Reader installed.

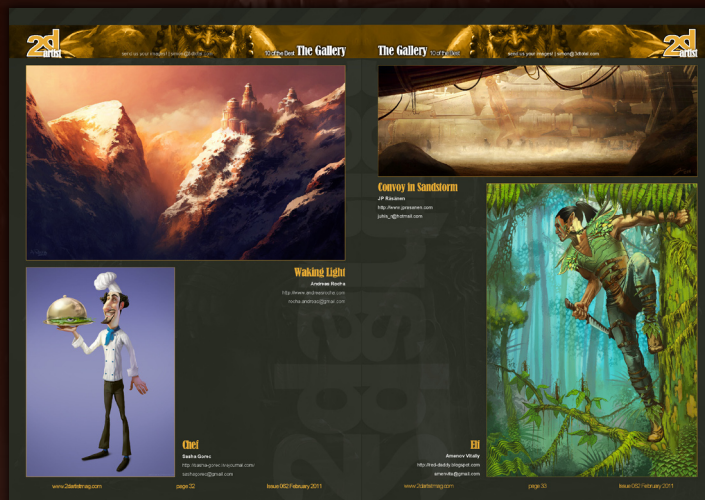
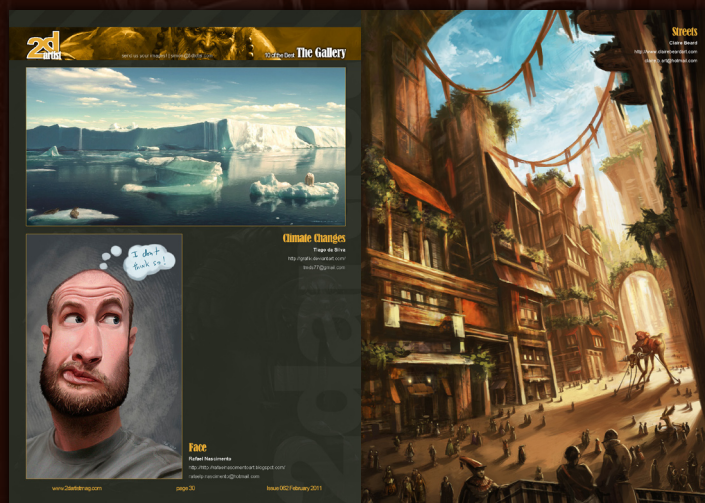
You can download it for free here: [DOWNLOAD!](#)

To view the many double-page spreads featured in 2D Artist magazine, you can set the reader to display 'two-up', which will show double-page spreads as one large landscape image:

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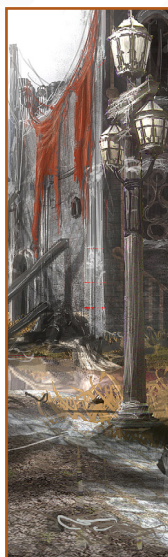
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If you're having problems viewing the double-page spreads that we feature in this magazine, follow this handy little guide on how to set up your PDF reader!



Contributing Artists

Every month many artists around the world contribute to **3DCreative** and **2DArtist** magazines. Here you can find out a bit more about them! If you would like to be a part of **3DCreative** or **2DArtist** magazine, please contact: simon@3dtotal.com



Dimitar Tzvetanov

Dimitar Tzvetanov sees Cg as hobby and work. Dimitar works in the video games industry and has been doing so for more than 10 years. Currently Dimitar works in Haemimont Games in Bulgaria as a lead 3d/Environment artist and has several images in Ballistic publishing books and some magazines too.



<http://www.artbychrom.com/>
chrom@artbychrom.com

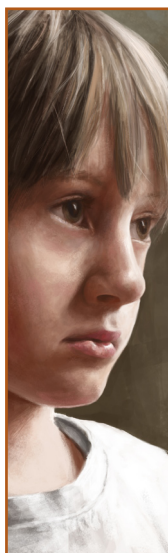


Jesse van Dijk

Concept Artist and Production Designer from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, with over four years of industry experience.

Immediately after receiving his Master's degree in Industrial Design at the Delft University of Technology, he went to work in the games industry. He is currently a senior concept artist at W! Games, Amsterdam, and does freelance work as well.

<http://www.jessevandijk.net/>
jesse@jessevandijk.net



Richard Tilbury

Has had a passion for drawing since being a couple of feet tall. He studied fine art and was eventually led into the realm of computers several years ago. His brushes have slowly been dissolving in white spirit since the late 90s, and now his graphics tablet has become their successor. He still sketches regularly and balances his time between 2D & 3D – although drawing will always be closest to his heart.

<http://www.richardtilburyart.com>
rich@3dtotal.com



Gallery Image by Steve Jung

S. JUNG '10



Jason Wei Che Juan

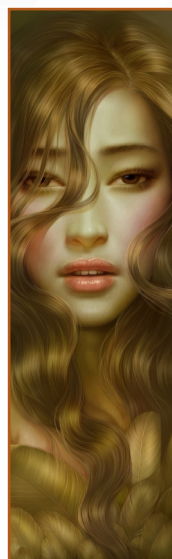
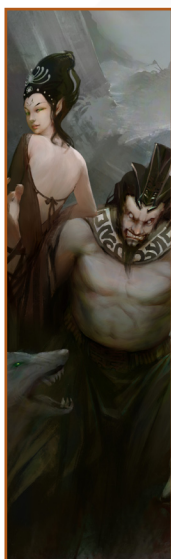
Is a Character Artist born in Taichung, Taiwan in 1977 who has always wanted to be an artist. After finishing a BA

Degree in Maths in 2001, with his deeply embedded dream of being an artist, he decided to take his first drawing class at the Art Institute of Seattle. In 2004

he began his career, working on the Narnia DS game. In 2005, he took things further by learning oil painting. He currently works at Arena.Net as a

Character Artist.

www.jasonjuan.com/ | Jasonj05@msn.com



Yuehui Tang

Yuehui Tang was born in the Heilongjiang Province in China and graduated from Harbin Teachers University in 1999.

Yuehui has had numerous pieces of art displayed in varying books and has won many CG competitions.



<http://www.cgtnt.com>

tyhart@163.com

Piracy Notice

February 2011 Update

3DTotal would like to thank everyone who has purchased the magazine, our anti-piracy efforts are already working and last month we received the most sales to date. With this continued push and support from the community we can make the mag even better. We plan to re-invest the profits back into the magazine and have already started discussions with elite artists to provide you with even more improved content. We're also considering many new wonderful ideas which we will start to reveal over the coming months.

Thanks again for your support.

Previous Announcement

3DTotal.com Partnering With ConceptArt.org

3DTotal is glad to announce that the successful anti-piracy system used on ConceptArt.Org to protect it's video content is now being used to bring an end to piracy of the content produced by the incredible artists who support our magazines, website and tutorials which are enjoyed by so many. This anti-piracy effort has brought to light many of the users who have been pirating content illegally in the ConceptArt.org community and it is now assisting with protecting and enforcing copyrights here.

3DTotal greatly appreciates all our customers and the incredible artists who support this community with products. Piracy has become a major obstacle that must be resolved in order to see the artists who create these works and 3DTotal see success long into the future. Without the content sold here, this community and resource would not be what it is. With the support of our customers we have been able to offer an ever increasing stable of great content at affordable prices. Thank you all for your continued support. We are here to help teach and assist artists worldwide.

This month's interview is with pin-up royalty Serge Birault. Serge has a unique style that is instantly recognizable and breathtakingly realistic, and in the following pages he gives us a little insight into how he paints, as well as telling us about how he has to balance out his super-realistic paintings with some cool speed paintings.

SERGE BIRAULT

“The soft round airbrush is my favorite tool. When you use it with a very low opacity you can easily blend colors and do clean gradients. It’s a bit like a traditional airbrush, but easier.”



Interview with Serge Birault

Hi Serge! Now, many of our readers will be familiar with your work as you are a regular in our galleries, and pretty much known as the digital pin-up king! But can you tell us a little about how you got interested in art, and how did you end up painting pin-ups?

The digital pin-up king! Oh God, where is my crown? I'm not sure I deserve that title. There are so many great pin-up artists like Aly Fell, Matt Dixon, Loopydave, Andy Hickinbottom or Rebeca Puebla... I loved Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres and William Bouguereau when I was younger. Then I discovered Gil Elvgren and, of course, Hajime Sorayama and I knew what I wanted to do. I had never seen such realistic rendering before and I spent a lot of time trying to emulate his style. Sorayama's pin-ups are naughtier than mine. I would say he is my major technical influence, but Elvgren's girls are simply the best pin-ups of all time. Like him I try to do humorous pictures.

I also love caricatures. I'm not that good at them, but a lot of caricaturists like Sebastian Krüger or Dominic Philibert have had a great influence on me. I try to avoid proportions that are too realistic. Cartoon pin-ups by Loopydave, for example, have provided me with some new references.

Perhaps I should have said digital pin-up royalty - I love the rest of the royal family too! There are a lot of names I recognize in there from my days at art college. It sounds like you were heavily influenced by some great, traditional artists. Do you have a traditional art background? How did you end up painting digitally?

I didn't study art, but I practiced using acrylic, oils and (of course) airbrushes. I began to use a computer a very long time ago, nearly 20 years in fact. It was very hard to create big digital files, but it was far easier than working traditionally. I ended up painting digitally because I'm lazy.



Those in the know will be aware that you are currently preparing a tutorial series for us that we are very excited about, but for those who can't wait maybe you can give us a brief insight into some of your processes and the tools that you use. Don't give too much away though; they will need to read the series for that!

I always use the same technique. The Soft Round airbrush is my favorite tool. When you use it with a very low opacity you can easily blend colors and do clean gradients. It's like a traditional airbrush, but easier.

Most of us will be familiar with your very clean and tidy pin-ups, but whilst looking through your galleries I came across some really nice speed paintings. Do you do these for fun, or do you find it is a nice way to experiment with ideas without committing your time to a complete project?

Yes, I like doing speed paintings too. When I finish a big picture I need to do some fast and little sketches; it's a good way to find new ideas or new techniques. I can easily create more dynamic pictures than classical pin-up poses.

Unfortunately my clients never ask for this kind of work; they always want clean and fully detailed pictures.

That is surprising. The variety in your portfolio is outstanding. Do you find it quite liberating to shake loose from your very clean rendering techniques from time to time?

Oh yes! Liberating is the word. I think I must look like a maniac when I do this kind of picture. I will have to try to mix these two styles, like Simon Bisley. He's a very good example of what I want to try to do.

“If you want to have very clean rendering you have to be patient, it's the only solution.”

You mentioned that you tend to be asked to create pin-ups more than other sorts of images. If you could work in any part of the industry or on any project that didn't involve pin-ups what would it be?

Actually, I'm currently working as character designer for a 3D animated series for very young children (between 3 and 5 years old). Strange, isn't it? But, hell yeah - I like that!



I am sure I am not the only one who has looked at your work and thought "Wow - that must have taken ages!" How long, on average, does it take you to complete a painting? Do you find you spend your whole day in front of the computer? An average picture takes me about two days, or about 15 hours. But I have already spent more than 70 hours on a picture for Sashimi's Revenge because of the very complicated tones. If you want to have very clean render you have to be patient, it's the only solution. It's not a problem for me, I'm patient person... at least I am when I am painting. I've got two

children so I can't spend my whole day in front of my computer. I will soon have to paint with acrylics and I think that will be a good thing. I am beginning to have binary dreams with only zeros and ones in them.

Sitting in front of the computer all day can be a real drag. Do you think it's important to get outside and see the sights, not only to keep you sane but to look for influences and inspiration? I try to not work during weekends and spend time with my sons. Sometimes I realize they are probably the only reason why I see the light of



the day. This job is like a vampire. Even when I go out to see my friends, I work... I look at faces, the lights, the reflection... It's not a job but a kind of curse!

I will travel a lot this year. I have a lot of master classes to do so I'm going to try and visit a lot of museums. In museums, I look like a child in a toy shop.

You mention that you will soon be doing some work in acrylics. Is this a project that you can tell us about? When you work traditionally what

tools and type of paints do you use? And do you ever try to reproduce the same kind of finish on your traditional images as you do on your detailed pin-ups?

I can't speak about it right now, but it's for an exhibition. I try to have the same finish and the same level of detail. I will work with acrylic because I can't work on canvas. I no longer have an airbrush and it will be difficult with only brushes.

What is the CG industry like in France? Do you find that most of the projects that you do are for



foreign clients, or is there a big demand for this kind of thing over there?

I have very few French clients. I had some very bad experiences with them. It's a kind of tradition to pay artists badly and late and give short deadlines in France. I try to avoid them. There are, of course, some exceptions. One of my best clients is French and I sometimes teach in a very good and pleasant art school. So I really don't know what the French CG industry looks like, and I don't want to know.

Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed by us. It has been a lot of fun looking through your portfolio and finding out more about you. I am really looking forward to letting everyone see the amazing images you have made for the pin-up series. I know it will be a massive hit! Thanks Serge, speak to you soon.

My pleasure! Thank you too. Now I must go and finish all the pin-ups I have to do for you *whip crack*!

Serge Birault

For more information please visit:

<http://www.sergebirault.fr/sb/index.php>

Or contact them at:

serge.birault@hotmail.fr

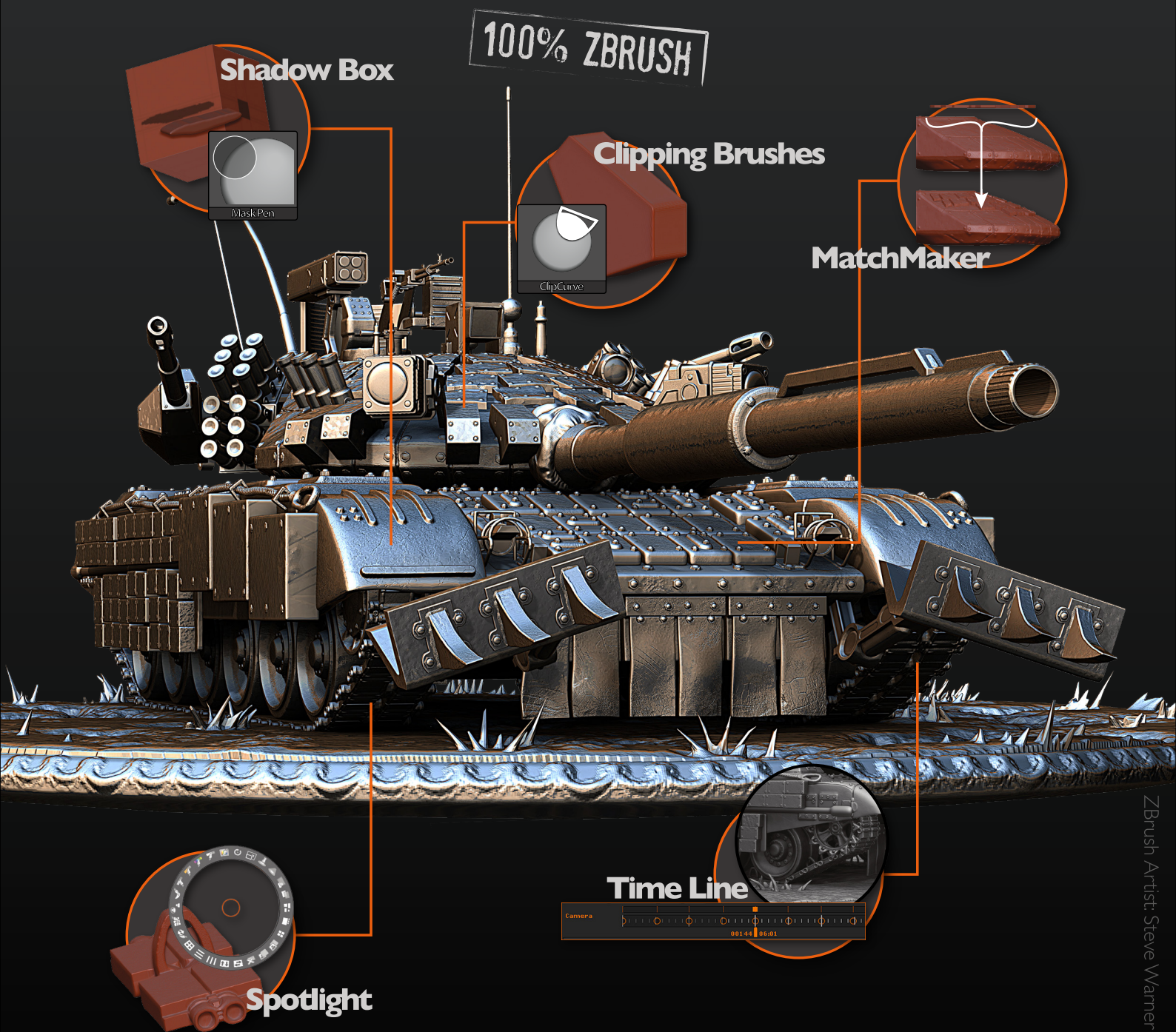






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ZBrush Artist: Steve Warner

“After playing with the layer modes you can get very nice results from which you can start to paint”



SKETCHBOOK OF DIMITAR TZVETANOV

Dimitar Tzvetanov is a multi-talented artist working in the computer games industry. Dimitar usually works in 3D, but in this issue he gives us a peek at some of his sketches and speed paintings.

SKETCHBOOK OF DIMITAR TZVETANOV

It is a little bit strange for me to talk about my sketchbook because I am actually a 3D artist, or I started my career as a 3D modeler anyway. But years passed and I found that the 2D part of game creation work is very interesting too. Some of the sketches here are for practice, some are for personal projects and some for commercial work. Not all are new; some of them I made several years back.

I will start with the oldest first. These two plants and the fish-like building were made for an unreleased game project. The setting was an alien desert world with giant plants and the remains of an ancient culture from before the planet was turned into a waste land. I drew them on paper first and then colored them in Photoshop (**Fig.01 – Fig.03d**).



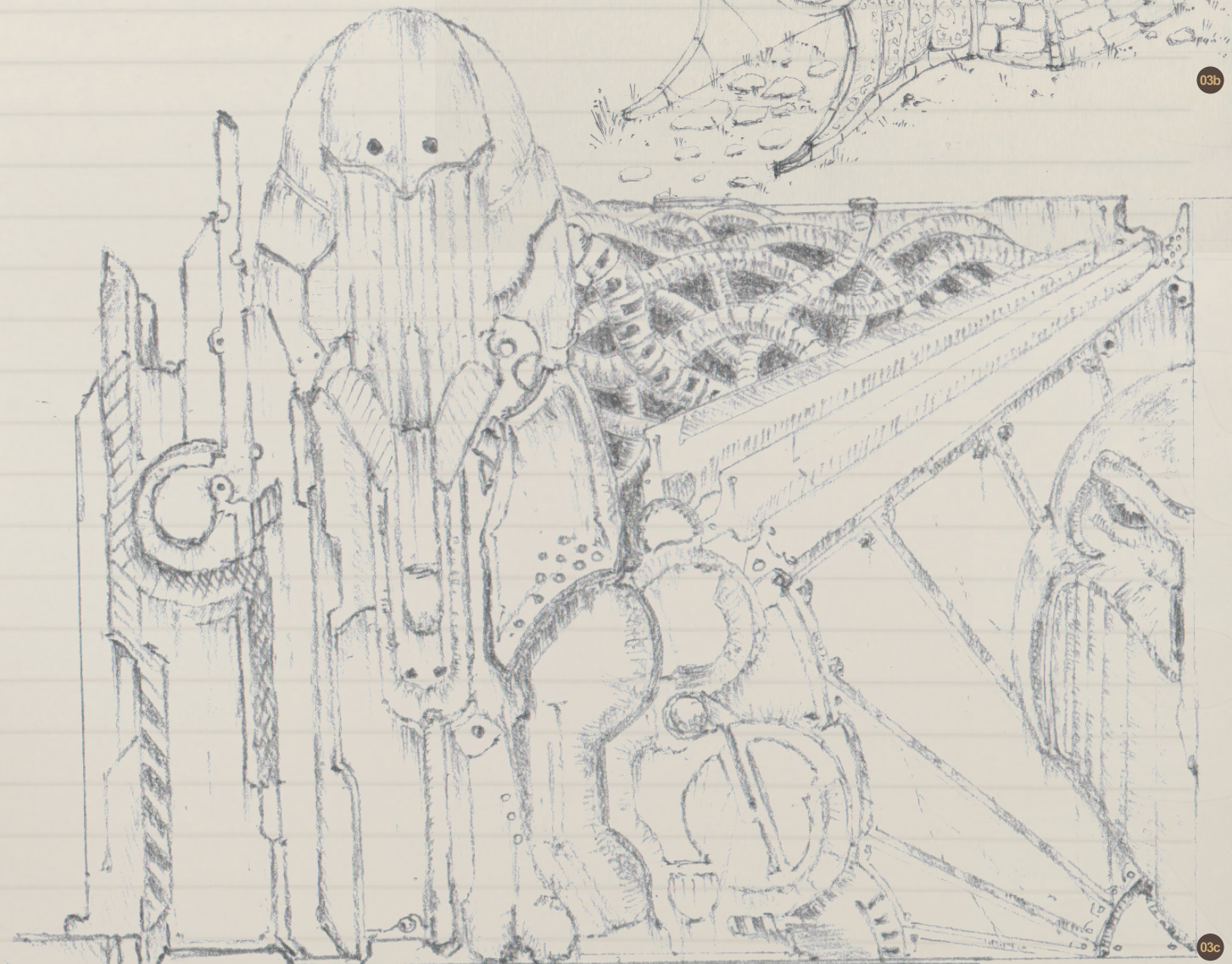
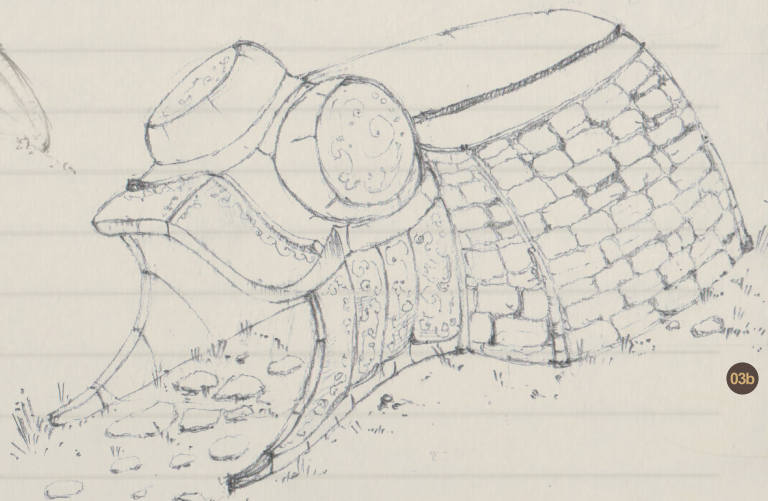
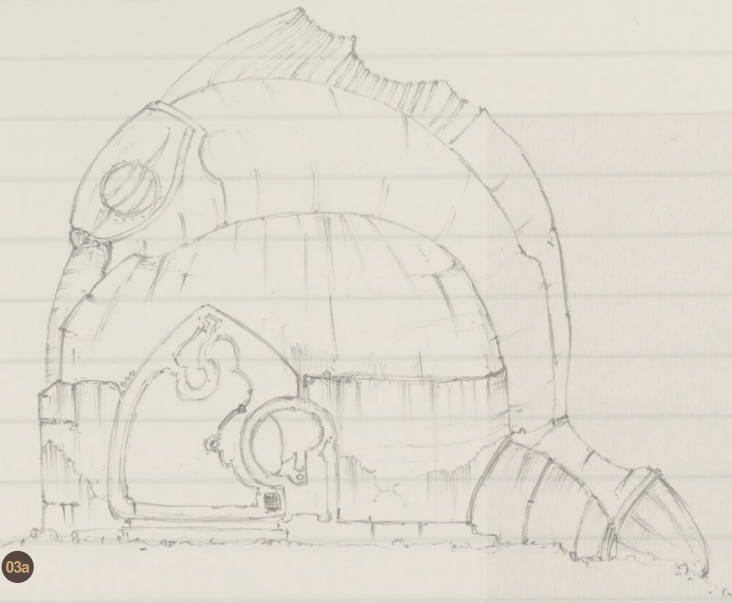
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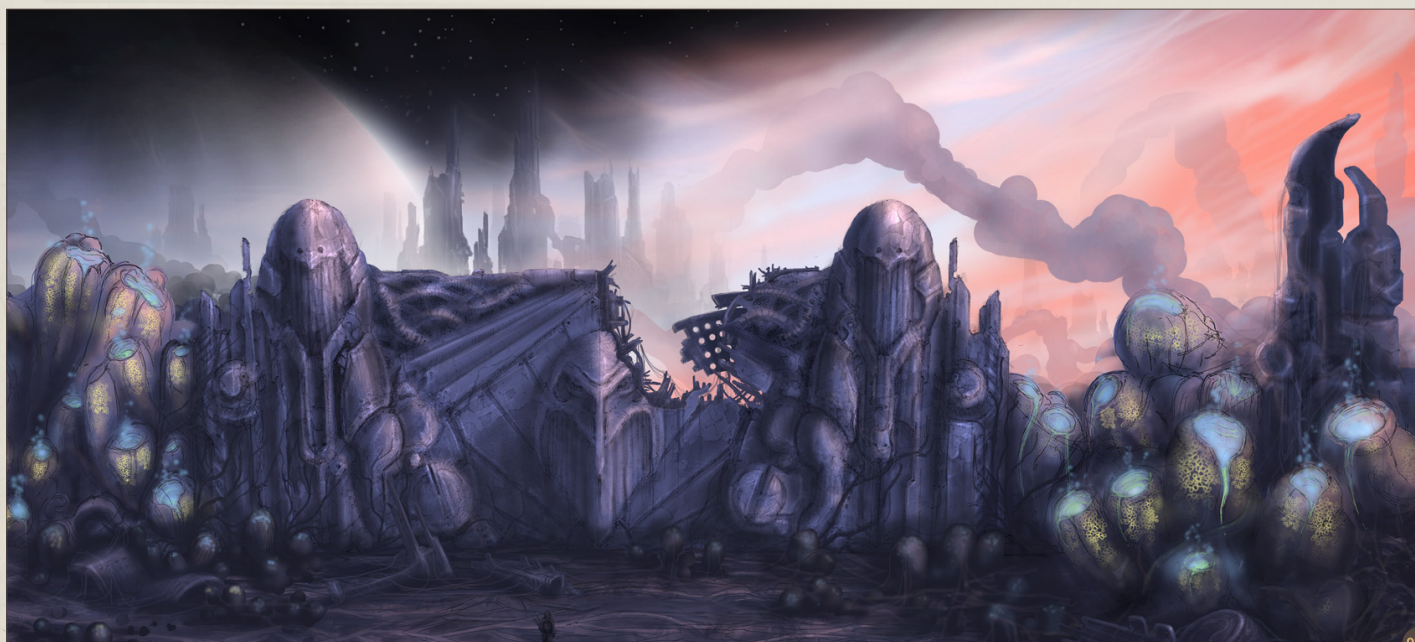


02



02a





03d

Those two are also for a game project. They were created to establish the mood of the game levels. This one was a post-apocalyptic setting for a hack and slash game (Fig.04 – Fig.05).

These three here are new works from the past few months made for a personal project that I am working on. It will be like a game level with a lot of 3D objects arranged inside the UDK engine. I was highly inspired by Conan Lore when I painted them.

A lot of custom brushes were used too; some made by myself and others from the internet (Fig.06 – 08).

In these two I was trying a new technique (Fig.09 – 10).



04



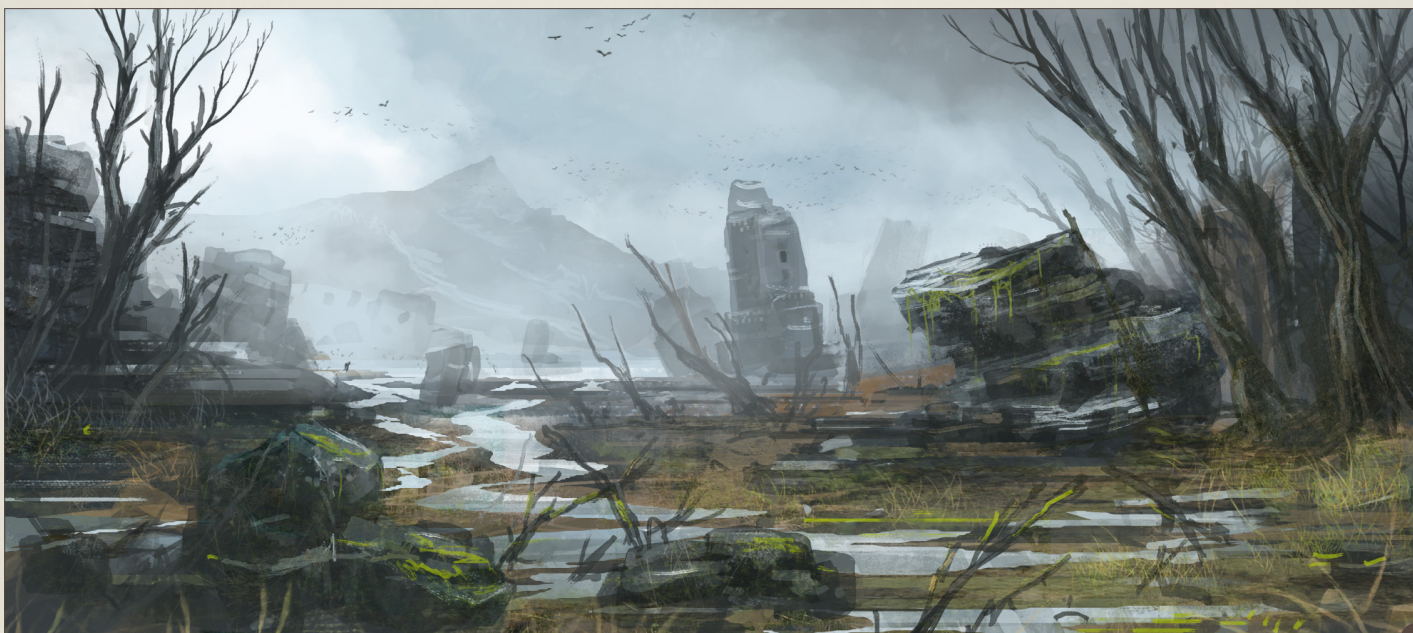
05



06



07



08

I learned it from the great Richard Anderson after watching his videos. I started the background of the image with a mix of paints. After playing with the layer modes you can get very nice results from which you can start to paint.

We'll hope you guys enjoyed this. Thanks!

DIMITAR TZVETANOV

For more information please visit:

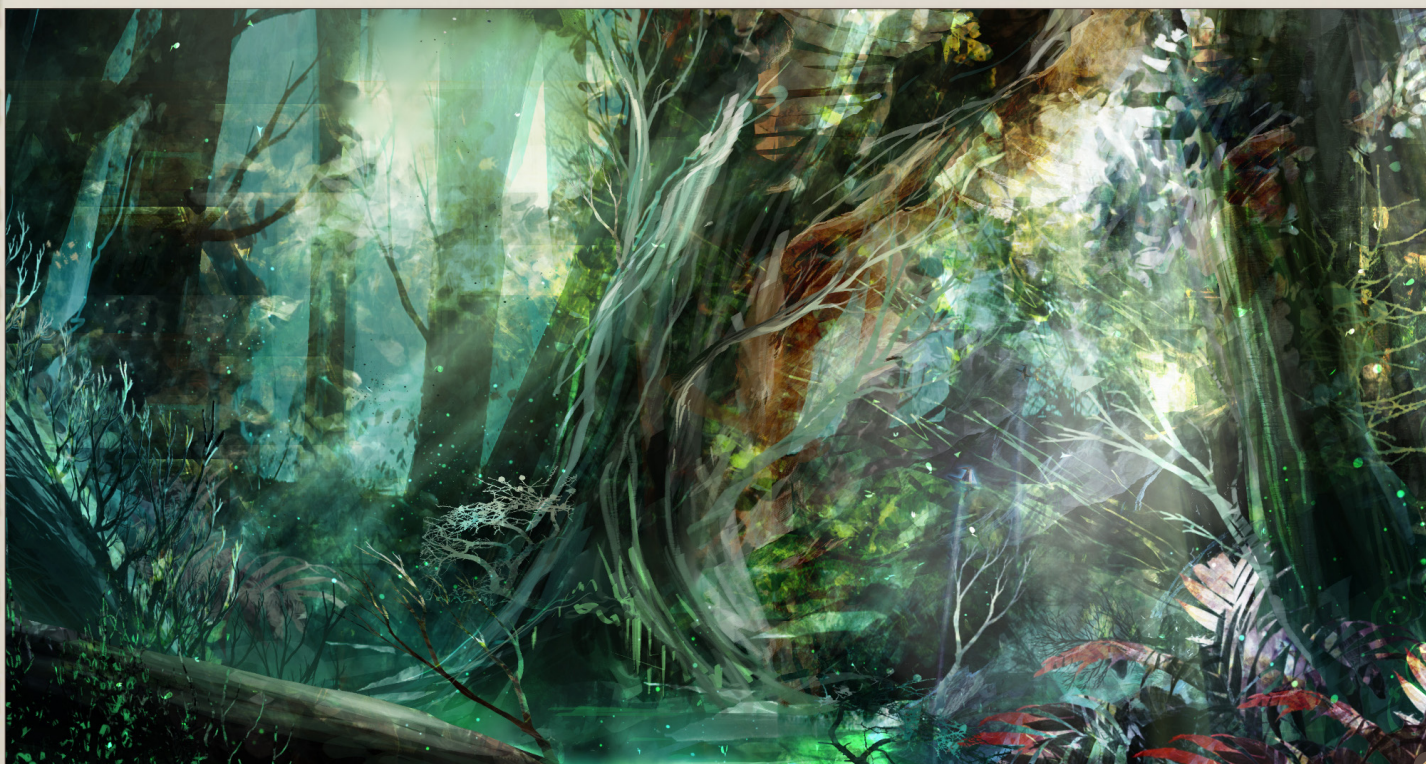
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09



10



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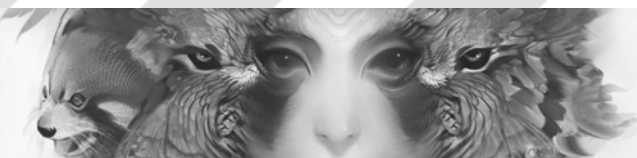
Wild Animals CG Art Elites
Invitational Competition

Artist:

Andrew Jones

website: www.shareoneplanet.org

Global Commonweal
Competition
for Top CG Artists!



Commonweal and Art Hand-In-Hand: “Share One Planet” Keep Drawing

The development of industrialized society brings unprecedented pressure to the nature environment, which cause the speeding decrease of wildlife habitats. Everyone should pay attention to what we are facing. Art and commonweal join hands enhancing awareness of global wildlife protection, the “Share One Planet CG Art Elites Invitational Competition” has opened for almost half a year till now. This first international major CG art competition featuring wildlife theme is organized by Wild Animals Cultural Project Fund under China Foundation for the Development of Social Culture, China Institute of Strategy and Management (CISM), The International Association of Computer Graphics Artists (IACGA) and China Association for Global Development under the United Nations; its executive organizers are leewiART International Computer Graphic(CG) Art Promoting Organization and Beijing Imperial Court Development Company Ltd.

According to our latest statistics, the “Share One Planet” Competition has invited 331 artists from more than 50 countries/regions to join as entrant. We’ve received 113 WIP entries and 23 final entries. Driven by their sympathy to wildlife and best wishes to human society, artists depict unforgettable moments of the animals they feel attached to. They are not just showing the world how skillful and talented they are, but also express their care and love to the planet we live in. The competition draws extensive attention with the help of coverage on international press such as CGSociety, ImagineFX; and also the series interview runs on Chinese magazine CGW.

Entrants are asked to create entries portraying endangered species in China. 100 species are listed as potential theme and the competition has ten routine categories and one special

category: Portrait (digital painting & digital sculpture), herd (digital painting & digital sculpture), Mother’s love (digital painting & digital sculpture), Prey and Predator (digital painting & digital sculpture), Harmony (digital painting & digital sculpture), plus the Special Category Swan Lake (digital painting). Artists may choose their preferred categories, choose to create the most thrilling moment of the Mother Nature in their eyes, and to capture diverse beauty of distinct species.

At the invitation of “Share One Planet” Organizing Committee, several renowned international CG artists created promotion posters for respective categories. They are Andrew Jones, Adrian Smith, Daniel Docui, Cecil Kim, Yin Weiye (Franc), Zhang Wang, Mélanie Delon and Chris Ayers. They illustrate their understanding of the idea “Share One Planet” over the following pages.

We appreciate the support and attention from CG artists, art armatures and people from all walks of life in favor of commonweal events everywhere. We hope to see more artists join our competition, to share their concern with the world, about wildlife, about Earth and our environment. Let this not only be a contest about art creation, even more, it will be an event fighting for a better future for animals and mankind.

General Information of “Share One Planet” Competition

The ‘Share One Planet’ Wild Animals CG Art Elites Invitational Competition is organized by Wild Animals Cultural Project Fund under China Foundation for the Development of Social Culture, China Institute of Strategy and Management (CISM), The International Association of Computer Graphics Artists (IACGA) and China Association for Global Development under the United Nations; its executive organizers are leewiART International

Computer Graphic(CG) Art Promoting Organization and Beijing Imperial Court Development Company Ltd. The competition invites CG masters worldwide to take part. Winners will be awarded with prize money as well as special designed golden, silver and copper trophies. The Organizers hope the platform of ‘Share One Planet’ can be built for encouraging artists to create meaningful and inspiring CG works to raise global attention of the plight of those wild animals that are a part of the one planet.

The highest prize in this competition is “10,000 USD + gilded trophy”. Entry submission deadline is April 20th, 2011. It’s open for CG artists all over the world and everyone who want to contributes his/her share for wildlife protection.

Questions regarding participation please consult: shareoneplanet@gmail.com

Competition Schedule

Submission: August 1st, 2010 – April 20th, 2011 23:59 (BJT, GMT+8)

Judging: May 1st, 2011 – June 1st, 2011

Awards Announcement: June 15th, 2011

For more information please visit: <http://www.shareoneplanet.org>





Andrew Jones

Andrew Jones has been heralded as "the apocalyptic art shaman" Beginning his career working with George Lucas at Industrial Light and Magic, he then went on to materialize a new vision for Nintendo's Metroid Prime series. He's now senior concept artist at Retro Studios. He also co-founded

the famous concept design website www.conceptart.org.

<http://www.androidjones.com/>



Adrian Smith

British illustrator, he got his name on the long list of fantasy sci-fi artists when took his first commissions for "Games Workshop", especially famous for his concept art for "Warhammer" series. Now he's busy providing service for Seoul Visual Works. Other clients includes EA games, Ubisoft, THQ Australia, THQ Canada etc.

<http://www.adriansmith.co.uk/>

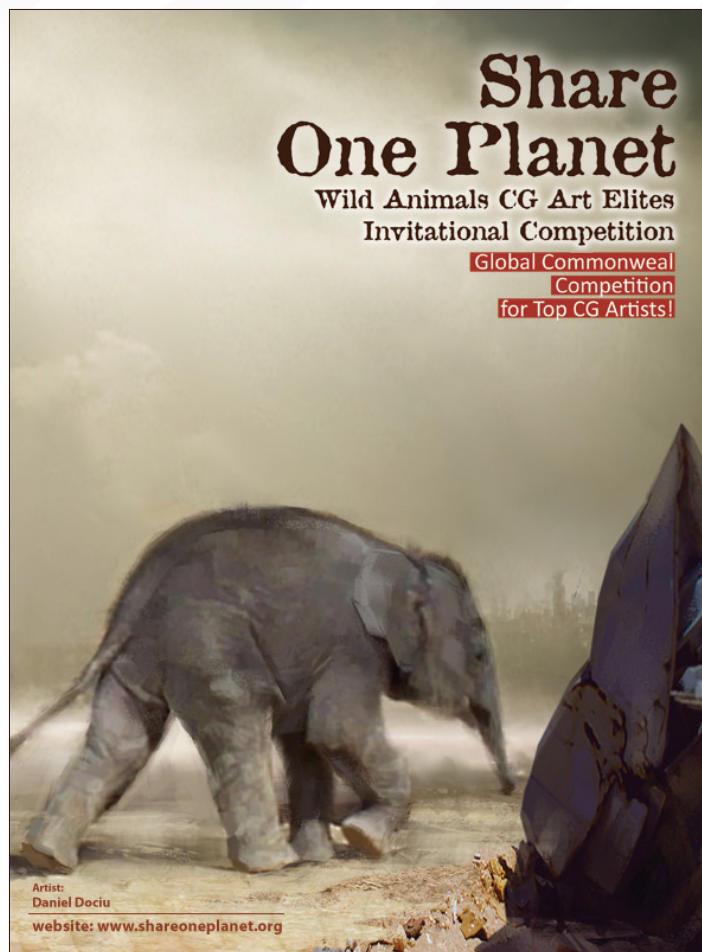


Daniel Dociu

Born and raised in the capital of Transylvania (Romania), he studied art and architecture from a young age and got his Masters Degree. After moved to the US in 1990, he worked for Squaresoft and EA, as well as consulting for Microsoft and numerous other developers and publishers. For the

past seven years he has been with Arenanet a fully owned subsidiary of NCSoft, as the Studio Art Director and Project Art Director for Guild Wars/ Guild Wars 2. He also functions in a Chief Art Director capacity for NCsoft West.

<http://www.tinfoilgames.com/>



Franc

One of the few Chinese artists who first practice CG art, he is published many times in the renowned international CG annual series "EXPOSÉ" and "Exotique". He now works as Art Director for international interactive game projects, clients including important enterprises like EA and 2K.

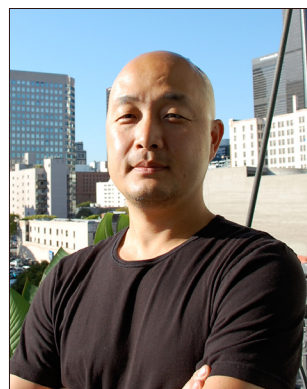
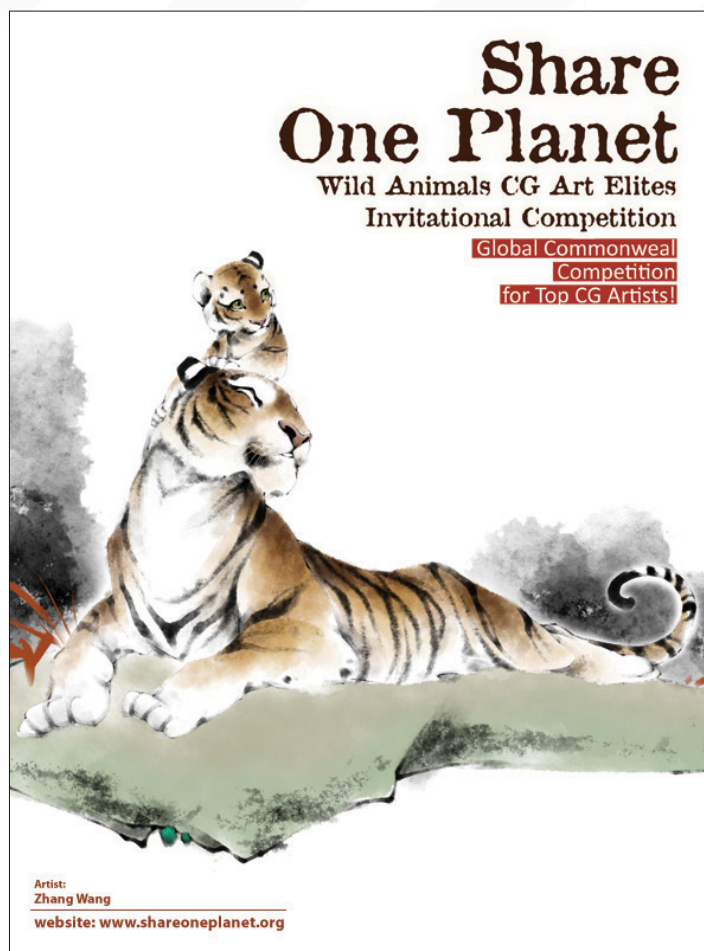
<http://www.franc-art.com>



Zhang Wang

Chinese CG artist, graduated from the Oriental Culture and Art Department of Nankai University. He used to be professor at Animation Department of Tianjin University, then turned to teach at Nankai University. His works were featured in "EXPOSÉ 2" and won many awards both in China and

international exhibits. He also provided character design for various projects of "Novoland", as well as game titles such as "Shushan Online", "Wan Mei" etc.



Cecil Kim

Born in 1972, Soul, Korea, then moved to US in 1990. He graduated from the Art Center College of Design in 1996 and worked at Square USA from 1997 – 2000. He now is Lead Concept Artist of Sony Computer Entertainment America Santa Monica Studio, mainly works on "God of War" titles. He is also instructor at Otis

College of Art and Design Los Angeles and Gnomon School of Visual FX.
<http://www.cecilkim.com/>



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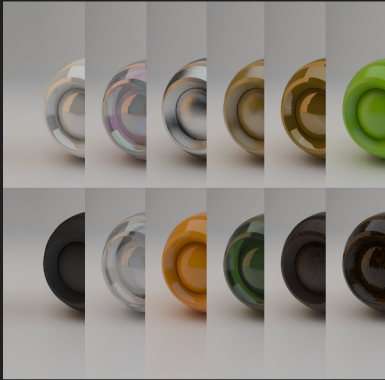
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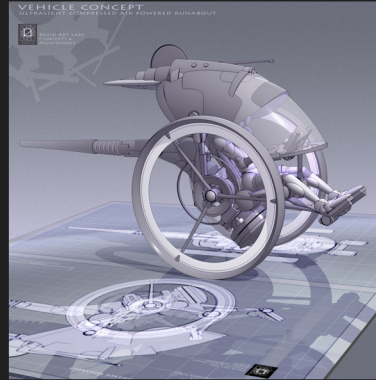
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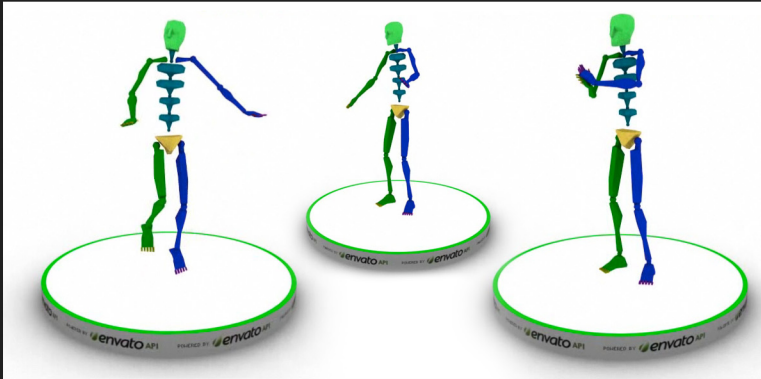
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THE GALLERY

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Amenov Vitaliy

Tiago da Silva

Paul Abrams

Sasha Gorec

JP Räsänen

Claire Beard

Steve Jung

Songnan Li





Knight and the Lady

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Black Queen

Paul Abrams

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Climate Changes

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rocha.andreas@gmail.com

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Sasha Gorec

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Composition

Chapter 02 | This Issue

Lighting and Color

Chapter 03 | Next Issue

Portraying Emotion

Chapter 04 | April Issue 064

Story Telling

Chapter 05 | May Issue 065

Perspective and Depth

Some things in art cannot be avoided, and some things must be understood to create great images. We call these Art Fundamentals. The same compositional rules and techniques to demonstrate depth of field are being used today as were being used hundreds of years ago. In this series industry professionals will be teaching us the art fundamentals that they put into practice, and will be sharing amazing tips that we can all use to improve the quality of our work.

ART FUNDAMENTALS



© Jesse van Dijk

01

Art Fundamentals Article: Chapter 02 - Lighting & Color

Software used: Photoshop

Lighting and color are two massively complex and broad fields, and it is by no means possible to fully discuss the theoretical principles of either in this article. There are many great resources out there that deal with these subjects in great detail, from many different angles. Here however, I'll provide some brief comments on some of the practical decisions concerning lighting and color while creating various concepts and illustrations.

Pitch

This image (**Fig.01**) shows a scene where many different elements are competing for the viewer's secondary attention. The 'first look' is meant to go directly to the football field, which is why it is shown in a very bright green, a color which in this image is reserved for the actual pitch only, and contrasts heavily with the predominantly bluish atmosphere. The 'second look' however, is more diffuse. There are over-bright blue spotlights, lit advertisements, and the specks of saturated colors in the audience. The colors used for the crowds are of all hues, and to underline the large scale of the scene. These desaturate as the distance to the camera increases. Notice how at the far end of the



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02

stadium the distinction between the different colors in the audience has become almost negligible.

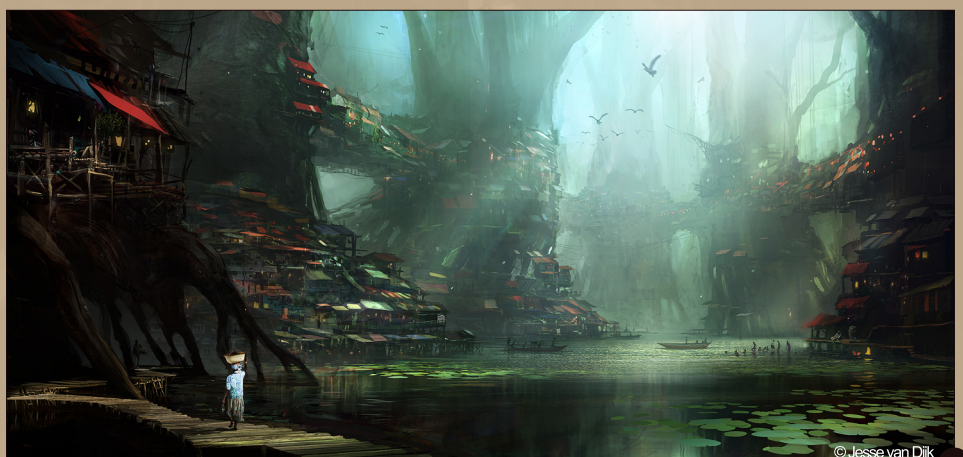
Cliff Dwellings

In terms of color the approach for 'Cliff Dwellings' (**Fig.02**) is simple: the scene is predominantly blue / greenish but to ensure it's interpreted as a full color image a strong 'offset color' is used: the orange lava.

Because the orange is more or less the complementary color it immediately stands out. The lighting is diffuse as the sun is hidden behind the clouds therefore the scene is hit by indirect light only.

Dzalou Freshwater Mangrove

In the swampy scene of Dzalou Freshwater Mangrove, lights break through the dense canopy of the trees far above (**Fig.03**).



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03



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04

In this case patches of direct sunlight are used to guide the viewer around the image. They help to accentuate the important elements, such as the village in the tree roots, the fishing boats, and the woman carrying the basket. Because of the clear indication of where the sun is, there are also unlit areas that contain very little detail, which improves the composition. Color wise, the approach of the image is similar to *Cliff Dwellings* as the dominant color (greenish blue) is offset by some small patches of very different and saturated pockets of color here and there.

Arctic Research Outpost

Whenever I paint snow I continually guard the readability of four different values: snow in light, snow in shadow, rock in light, and rock in shadow. Whenever the distinction between these becomes fuzzy, the image will become

harder to read. In reality however, the matter is often not as simple, as snow catching direct sunlight can be so bright it will push virtually every other value into the black.

However, when you're doing a painting, you can 'cheat' yourself around this exposure problem by making sure the snow and rock reads and the distinction between the four values is maintained. Keep in mind, the separation of these four areas is relative to the distance to the camera. For example, in this picture, the snow in shadow in the foreground is darker than the rock in shadow in the distance (**Fig.04**).

Indigo

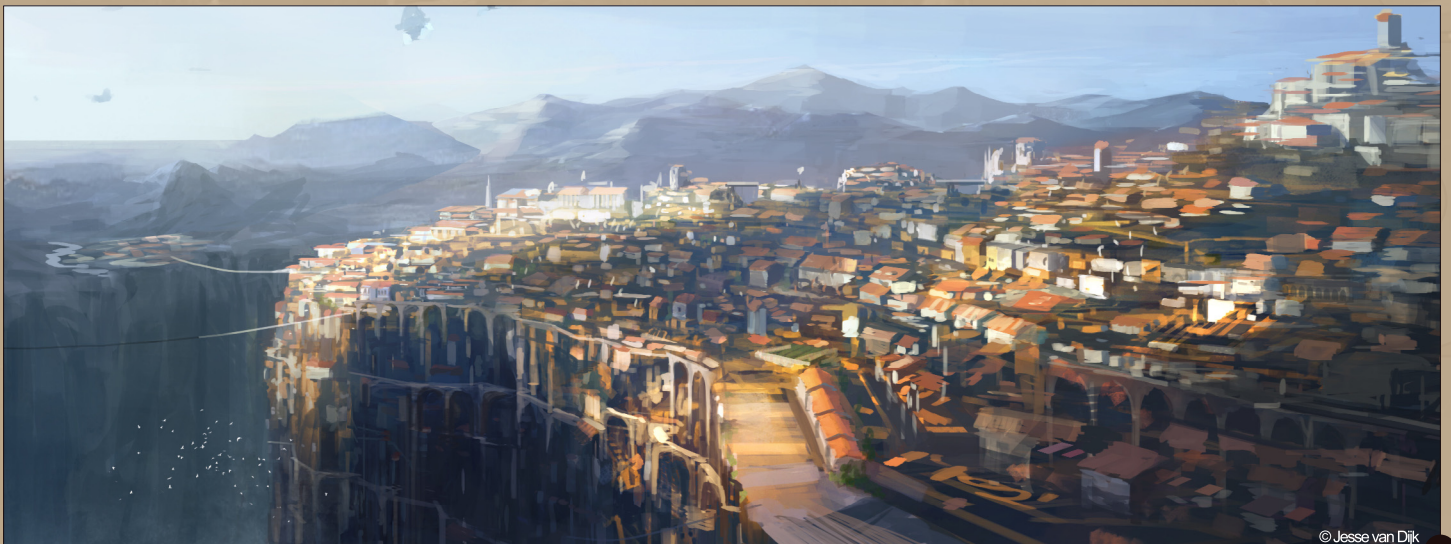
With the shot of the top of the pillar as shown in *Project Indigo*:
(link: http://www.jessevandijk.net/g_08_76.html)

the intent was to show not only the pillar itself, but also some of its context, some of it even outside of the frame. It mainly employs lighting and color to achieve this. Color wise for example, the isolation of this crowded city state is underlined by the difference in color between the city (vibrant, warm yellows and reds) and the bleak, cold grays of the outside world (**Fig.05**).

Unspecified objects outside the composition cast shadows that help to make the sunlit areas seem even more inviting, as well as suggesting there is more going on in this world than merely that which is shown inside the frame.

Netherworld Archipelago

In the image of the capital of the Netherworld Archipelago lighting is key, and in this case it's far more important than color (**Fig.06**).



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05





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07

The lighting clearly enters the cavern through some unseen hole in the ceiling, but individual colors are much harder to discern. The palette is mostly a warm greenish blue, except for the banners, which, in terms of color, are very deliberately different from everything else to make them stand out.

Spiritual retreat

The aim for the mood of this image was very clearly defined: it had to be a very sunny setting, with lush vegetation, and birds singing (**Fig.07**).

A place you would want to relax: a veritable spiritual retreat. To prevent the entire image becoming overly green, many different colored plants and trees were added, such as the pink cherry blossom trees. For the 'full color' feel of the image, the patch of blue sky is important, as it is one of the few instances of bright blue. To emphasize the brightness of the direct sunlight, the lit areas contrast strongly with the shadowed ones.

Procession of the Dead

As this image was used as a book cover, the color scheme needed to be simple but striking (**Fig.08**).



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08

When you zoom out you can see all major color essentially boils down to a linear gradient from warm browns in the lower left corner, to cold, deep blues in the top right corner. Book covers leave very little room for subtlety, as they need to stand out on shelves amongst many other titles. Brute force approaches such as the color scheme in this image are often employed because of this.

The lighting is vague, predominantly to allow for lots of darks around the lit character - the contrast needs to be highest here in order to properly catch the viewers eye.

Uriel 9

Uriel 9 uses a similar approach to 'Procession of the dead' and 'Netherworld Archipelago' (Fig.09).

The overall color is quite muted, but the bright orange bands on his armor provide lots of color contrast. The other implementations of color are more subtle: colder shadows, greenish haze near the ground plane, warm spotlights. The dominant light source is directed to emphasize the most important part of the robot, the upper

torso and head. The images used for the Dutch "Duivel" trilogy by Adrian Stone are another example of the importance of forgetting about subtleties when doing book covers.

The cover for part one needs to be immediately distinguishable from parts two and three, and vice versa.

The lighting is not very clearly defined, and in that sense the scene isn't very realistic. The main reason I wanted the background behind the characters to be so bright, was to ensure that their silhouettes stood out as much as possible in the scene (Fig.10).

About Jesse

Jesse van Dijk (1977) is a concept artist from Amsterdam, the Netherlands. His primary focus is world design for games and other entertainment media. Jesse currently works at Guerrilla Games / SCEE as a senior concept artist. He graduated at the Delft University of Technology with a Master's degree in Industrial Design Engineering in 2003. After his studies he worked for several game development studios prior to joining Guerrilla in 2009.



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09

Jesse van Dijk

For more information please visit:

<http://www.jessevandijk.net>

Or contact them at:

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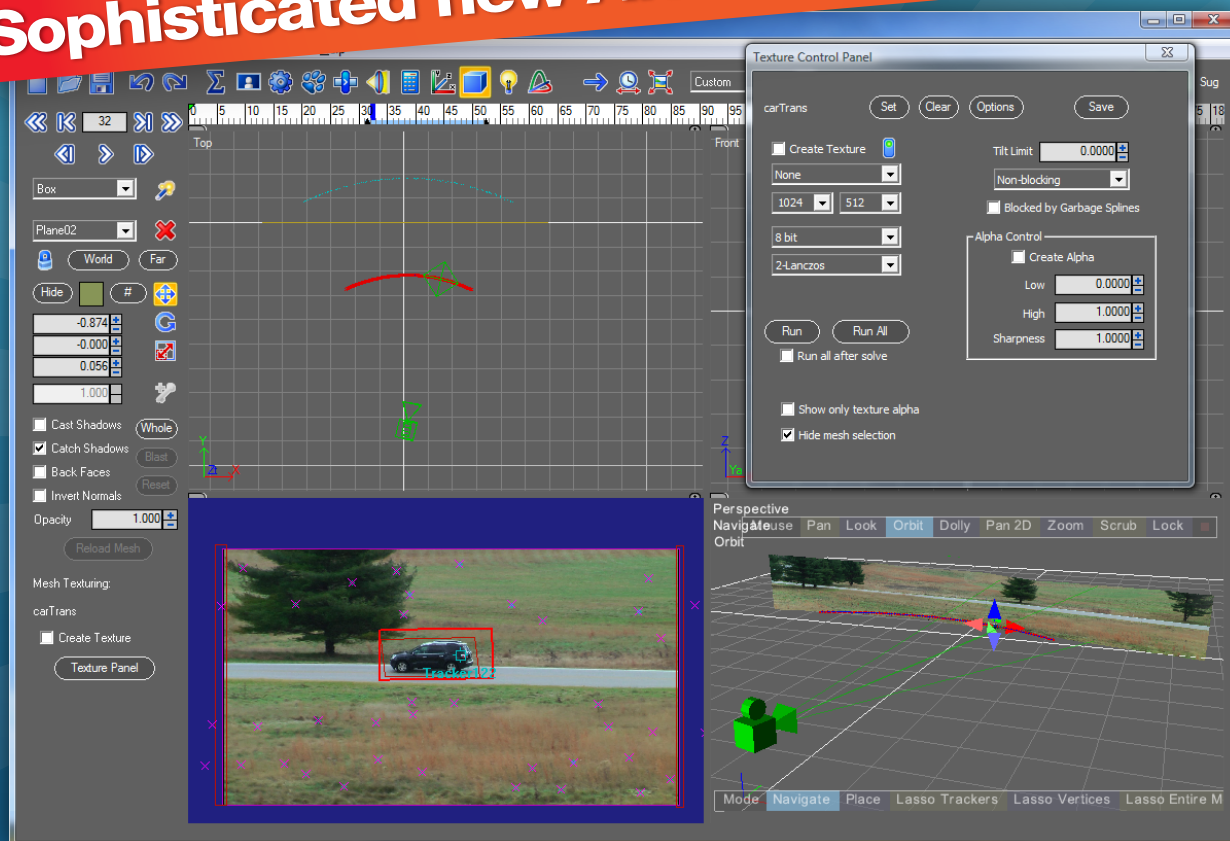
10



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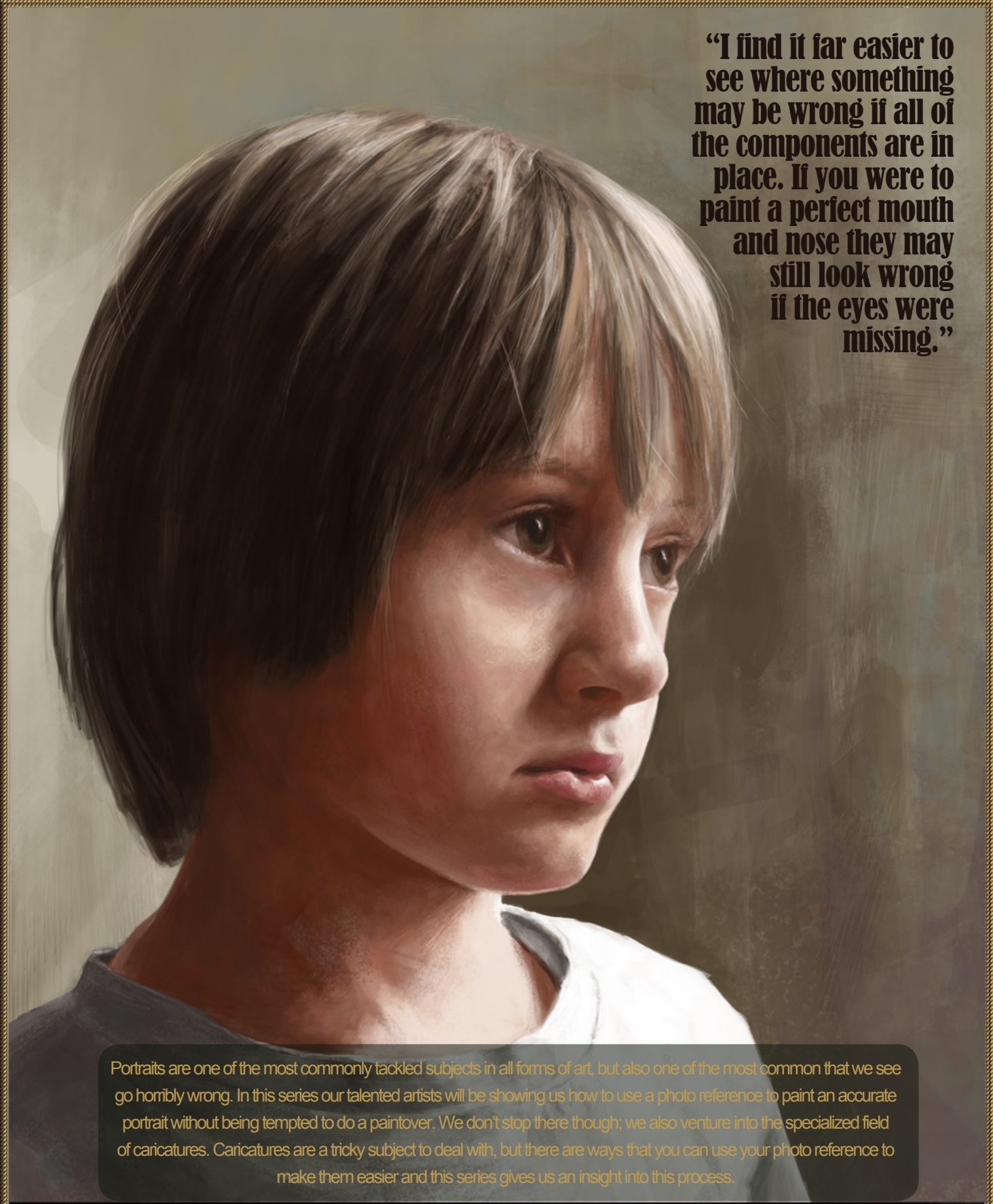
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beyond inspiration



“I find it far easier to see where something may be wrong if all of the components are in place. If you were to paint a perfect mouth and nose they may still look wrong if the eyes were missing.”

Portraits are one of the most commonly tackled subjects in all forms of art, but also one of the most common that we see go horribly wrong. In this series our talented artists will be showing us how to use a photo reference to paint an accurate portrait without being tempted to do a paintover. We don't stop there though; we also venture into the specialized field of caricatures. Caricatures are a tricky subject to deal with, but there are ways that you can use your photo reference to make them easier and this series gives us an insight into this process.

Portraiture

Chapter 04 | Male | Richard Tilbury

Portraiture - Chapter 04: Male

Software used: Photoshop

Introduction

This tutorial required a portrait to be painted using a photo as a reference and so the first decision that needed to be made concerned the subject. I decided to paint my son Gabriel and so picked up the camera and tried my best to persuade him to sit still while I took a few pictures. I photographed him from different angles in order to get a variation in the lighting and in the end opted to use the photo seen here in **Fig.01**.

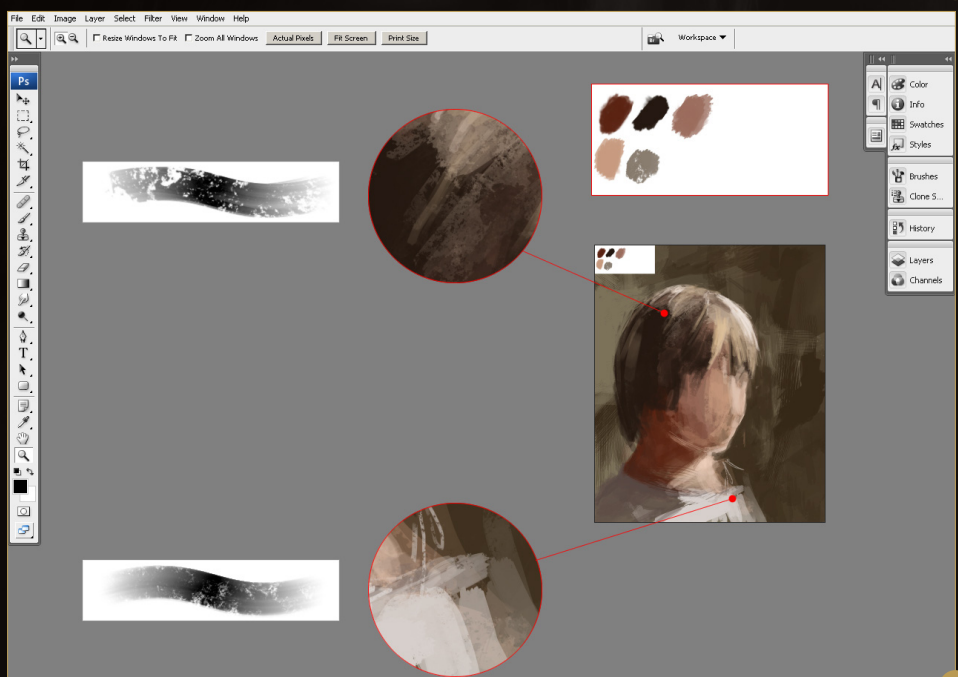
I also photographed him from the opposite side, but most of his face was in direct light and so did not look quite as good as this angle where there was a more interesting play of light and shadow. I liked this particular photo compared to the others partly because of the light, but mainly because of his expression which looked strangely melancholic; probably caused in no small part by my asking him to sit still for what seemed like an endless period of time! Anyway after taking a series of photos and some consideration I went for this one and could get on with the painting.

Blocking In

When it comes to digital painting the canvas proportions are not crucial as you can always extend the frame later or alternatively trim it, which is a luxury unavailable to traditional painting without re-stretching. I opted for a traditional portrait ratio and then began to make



01



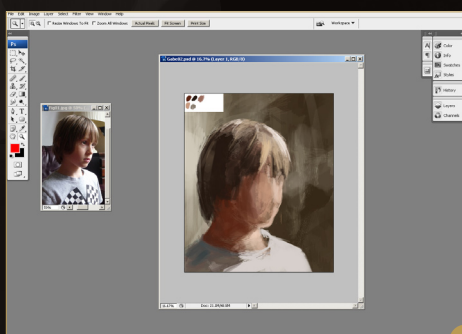
02

a mess on the background to get rid of the white void. I always keep the character separate from the background so that I can experiment with the color schemes independently. I used an array of brushes when blocking in, which ranged from the standard Hard Round brushes to Chalk ones that incorporated a Dual brush.

Fig.02 shows two details which use different brushes alongside a color palette in the top left corner. I created this palette so that I could

quickly pick the light, mid and darker tones whilst roughing in the general tones. You could, in fact, use the photo directly to establish your palette, but it will not be good practice for your eye and so I prefer to do it the old fashioned way; after all we do not want an identical copy.

Whilst working on the initial stages I like to reduce the size of the canvas so that I get a good overall impression of the painting and am not carried away with detailing. **Fig.03** shows



03



04

the typical view of my workspace with both the photo and the canvas at about the size I use to begin with.

Fig.04 shows the progress from the initial block in through to putting in the features. I find it is always good practice to work on the image as a whole and develop each area of the canvas at a similar pace. This way it is easier to see which areas may be wrong or need alteration. I could see at this point that the proportions were inaccurate, but I find it is much better to have something on the canvas. After all it is easier to change something when it is in front of you as opposed to existing purely in your head. During this phase I used the color palette to block in the volumes and get a sense of the light in the photograph.

I find the best way of tackling any painting that is based on "real world" observation is to establish early on the key areas of dark and light. In this case there is a distinct shape created through the face and hair that marks the boundary between the highlights and shadows (see red lines).

I often squint my eyes and try and get a simplified view of what I am looking at, as this encourages a keener focus on the main structure and proportion of the subject as opposed to any details.

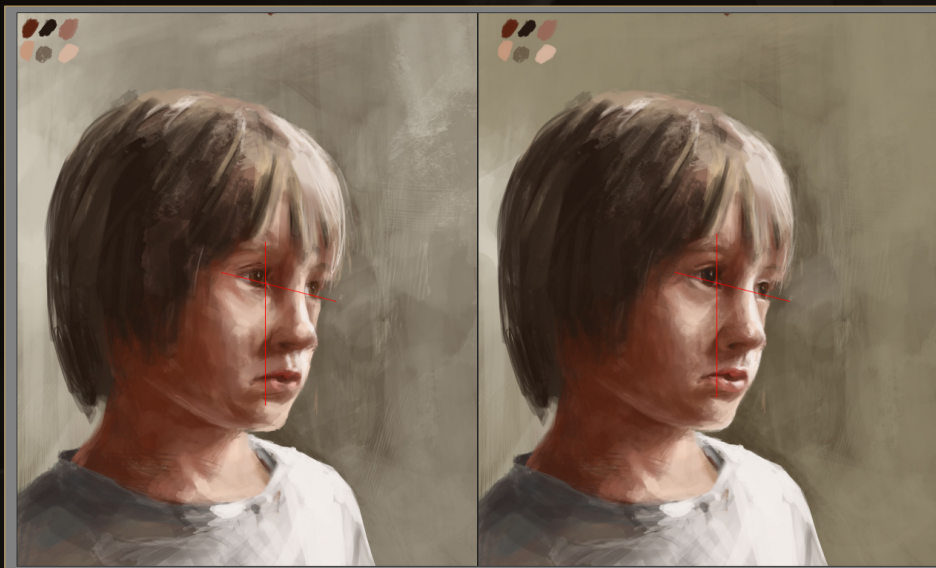
In the middle stage you can see that I have provisionally added in a value for the white area of the eyes. I have also blocked in the highlight catching the lower eyelid together with the shadow around the eye socket. This intermediate stage is used to sketch in the eyes, nose and lips so that I have a clearer idea about the overall proportions and their relationships. If any part of a portrait is wrong it will have an impact on the whole face and how we perceive it and so it is important to balance everything carefully. You can see in the final stage that all the features are now in place and how much more successful the image reads as a result. I find it far easier to see where something may be wrong if all of the components are in place. If you were to paint a perfect mouth and nose they

may still look wrong if the eyes were missing.

These are what I think of as the foundations and from here I usually begin the process of building and refining the painting.

Adjusting and Refining the Features

The background looked a little too messy and so I made this look more uniform first of all. I then copied the eyes onto a new layer and used the Transform tool to re-position them and change the scale. **Fig.05** shows the modified version on the right with some guidelines to better show the changes. The angle of the eyes has changed as well as the relationship between the left eye and the nose.



05

The thing to remember about portraits is that the smallest of changes can have a seemingly big impact on both the likeness and expression. I noticed that the right eye looked too small compared to the near one (left image in **Fig.06**) and so I used the Edit > Transform > Scale tool to address this. I also saw that the mouth shape was wrong, with too much shadow between the lips and no curvature to the upper lip.

There are two main ways I change things in a painting and one is by copying and pasting selections and then using Transform tools, such as Scale and Rotate, before blending these back in using the Eraser and some brushwork. The other method is by way of the Warp tool, which is equally useful but I advise doing this on a duplicate layer because if you are not careful you can end up with some obvious distortion.

So far I have been adjusting just the features of the face as these are the more crucial elements but the hair and shoulders needed to catch up a little. I created a new layer temporarily and then, using a finer brush, painted in some strokes



06

to add some definition. Most of the hair is in shadow when looking at the photo and so can be broadly blocked in, but the transition between

this and the highlights required some finer detail.

Fig.07 shows the image beforehand (left) and the result of this additional layer.



07

This is generally the pattern I followed from here on in; creating new layers for additional refinements and detail, and then flattening everything once I was happy. **Fig.08** shows one such version with a smoother transition between the light and dark tones.

You will also notice that I have altered the background, which remains as a separate layer. I kept a darker area to the right-hand side and a lighter band behind the head in order to create a contrast and play of light against dark. To reflect the warmer tones of the face and hair I also added in some reddish tones to help balance the portrait with the background.

Final Stages

In some ways I could have stopped the painting here, but there were still a few improvements that could be made. **Fig.09** shows a more refined version of the t-shirt, although this could have been left, which often lends a fresher quality to a painting as well as giving the viewer a better glimpse into the processes. Perhaps more significant is the change to the angle of the chin, which is now sharper, and the shape of the right pupil and lens, which has a more elliptical shape. The nose has also been modified slightly with a more defined change of angle as it slopes up towards the forehead. All of these changes are indeed modest, but collectively create an important difference to the overall portrait.



08

You will hear many artists say how valuable it is to flip their canvas horizontally from time to time in order to reveal any problems that they feel are there but cannot detect. I am no different in this respect and do this frequently throughout the process. In **Fig.10** you can see in the right-hand version that I have scaled up the left eye slightly, which looked wrong once I flipped the canvas.

One thing to be aware of is that a camera is liable to distort a person due to the lens and so when painting from this type of reference you may need to adjust proportions in order to account for this. I think in the end that you may need to balance what you see with what you know and use a little artistic license if you feel the painting does not look right.



09

Another aspect which was not wholly accurate was the width of the hair and neck, which looked too big. Using the Warp tool I pulled in the left edge, which made the neck look more slender and the area of hair somewhat smaller. **Fig.11** shows the portrait beforehand (left) alongside the result of this subtle transformation.

This almost concluded the portrait barring a soft highlight below the nose and a slight tilt of the lips. Here is the final version which I hope has done my son justice (**Fig.12**).

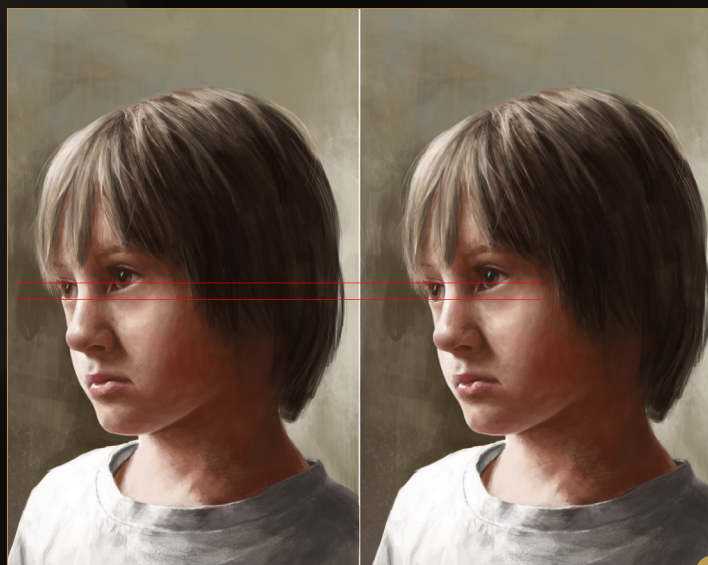
Richard Tilbury

For more from this artist visit:

<http://www.richardtilburyart.com>

Or contact them at:

rich@3dtotal.com



10



11



PAINTING CREATURES FROM FOLKLORE



Fantasy plays a huge part in digital art. It influences thousands of artists from around the world and has become a large part of the film and gaming industry. So much of what we see within this genre is drawn from fairy tales and folklore. In this tutorial series our artists will be showing us how to research creatures from folklore and use this gathered information to create an original and accurate depiction of these fantasy characters.

Chapter 1: September Issue 57 | Goblin | Andrei Pervukhin

Chapter 2: October Issue 58 | Fairy | Nykolai Aleksander

Chapter 3: November Issue 59 | Siren | Min Yum

Chapter 4: December Issue 60 | Ogre | Richard Tilbury

Chapter 5: January Issue 61 | Troll | Simon Dominic

Chapter 6: This Issue | Huli Jing | Jason Wei Che Juan

Painting Creatures From Folklore: Chapter 06 - Huli Jing

Software used: Photoshop CS3

With nearly 4,000 years of history, the Chinese culture has a lot of its own folklore, which includes songs and tales that tell stories of history, human nature, or love. With this image I wanted to explore the story of Daji and King Zhou of Shang in 1047 BC. Daji was a favorite concubine of King Zhou of Shang. She is a classic example of how beauty can cause the downfall of an empire or dynasty in Chinese culture. She is portrayed as an evil fox spirit in the Chinese novel *Fengshen Yanyi*, which is translated as "The Investiture of the Gods" or "The Creation of the Gods", also known as *Fengshen Bang*.

I am always building my own small library of books and keep them by my side. Wikipedia or online search engines like Google or Bing are very good resources, but be aware that there are still tons of resources out there that you cannot find online.

Strong initial sketches make the whole processes much easier, so establishing a good sketch from the beginning is way more efficient than fixing problems later. Some people think



01



02

one of the biggest benefits of digital paintings is the Undo button, but I feel that is not true. If you do it right from the beginning, why do you want to do it wrong, undo it, and do it again and again? It is the same as traditional painting. It is always good to start heading in the right direction, so you can just keep developing the image until it is completed.

The first stage is to define the characters. In this case it is based on existing characters so research is very important, but don't let the story restrict the illustration and imagination. It is always good to add a little personal flavor to it. In this illustration I could have illustrated an

event, but I wanted to focus on the characters themselves, so the key to the whole process is character design (Fig.01 – 02).

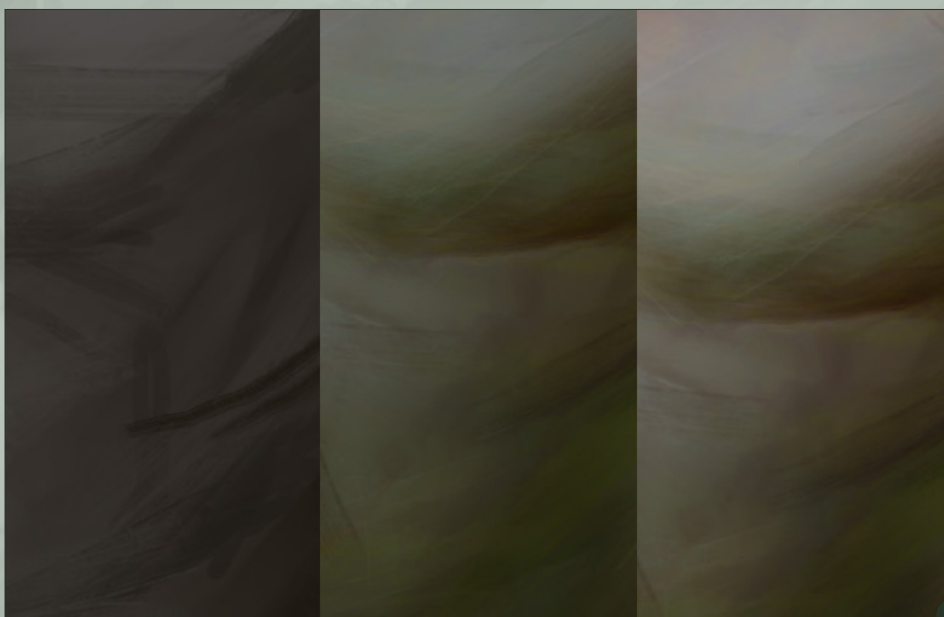
In the story, King Zhou (in his later years) drinks, has sex, lacks morals, and ignores all the affairs of the people. After thinking about these words, some faces started to appear in my mind, so I focused on the faces and tried to capture the expression on them and play with values for the composition.

Strong contrast and value are two major things I use to design everything. I also found some Western Zhou Dynasty 1046–771 BC pictures

for design references. Human anatomy is always a big topic when people talk about art, and that is why people spend years and years learning it. There is no shortcut; the only way is to study it and do more life drawing sessions.

Skin rendering is another big topic, and **Fig.03** shows a crop image of the skin in different stages. The trick is simple: more color. I rarely put in one solid color in a painting. Skin has more color than any other surface or material because it is so complex. One thing I do find is that usually the dark value has higher saturation. Another thing is that changing the hue and saturation will also change the value. I usually try to keep the value the same, which should mean as long as we keep the value the same, potentially we can fill in almost any color.

When it comes to backgrounds there are two things that define 3D space. One is perspective,



03

and one is value. Again the quick way to design it is using rough brush strokes with value and flow. I also introduced fox spirits into the painting at this point (**Fig.04**). At this point I tried to define the elements in the background and

foreground, and separated those into different layers which can help my process later.

Next it was all about the water. I looked at some photos of the ocean, which I took in the



04

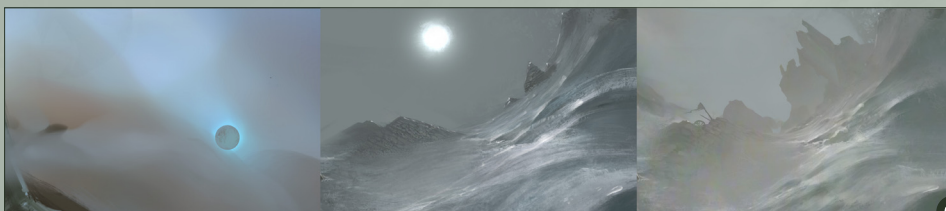
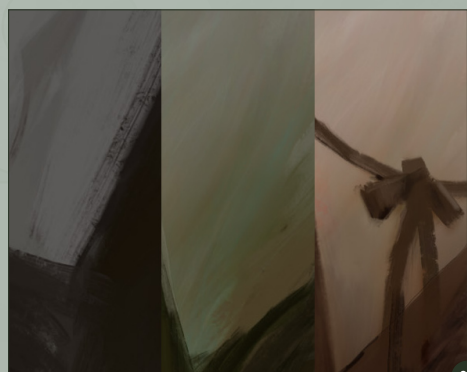


05

Olympic National Park in Washington State. I spent about eight hours painting water. I find painting water is very similar to drapes and fabric because the surface is smooth (**Fig.05**). I also think that the perspective of the waves was important for this scene; once I nailed down the waves the water looked good. The further away the waves are the smaller and flatter they look.

A quick lighting test on the characters gave me an idea of what the moon light looked like. The collapsed building was a good way to show the empire falling and represent war. Color started to kick in to the painting, and since this was not a happy story or a happy ending for them, a cool color tone suited the painting. I used a Soft Light layer in Photoshop for the initial color.

This stage is all about rendering and adding more details to the smaller areas to fill the empty space (**Fig.06**). This is extremely time-consuming and the more you understand lighting and the forms of objects the better you can do it. Painting still life and human figures will improve your rendering skills. At this point I decided the background and the moon were over-emphasized and I decided to take the moon out (**Fig.07**). Also at this point I started to tackle the contrast and value of the water. Adding a couple more interesting structures in the far background also helped the painting have more depth. Using the Overlay and Soft Light layer again and again is like glazing in traditional media. The more layers you apply to the painting, the richer color it will look. Again, as long as we keep the value the same, we can put in almost any color we want.



When painting a complex scene with more than one character in it, the foreground and background can be very difficult. The difficulty is not the single subject or single character. It is the balance of everything. It is like a balancing game; when we do too much on one side, we need to decide to take it out or add more to the other side. I changed the skin tones so that

Daji would be the first to be seen, and I also changed each individual element slightly to lead the viewer's eye a bit more (**Fig.08**).

Detail is another thing that needs to be addressed. When painting on a computer we zoom in and out often and sometimes this will make us lose the sense of detail, and over-detail

certain areas. You can balance this out with careful use of the Smudge tool.

Even in a complex scene made up of small objects, the keys are design, composition, balance, value, and perspective. Each part should be addressed, and to master it you must study and practice it. I hope you enjoyed this tutorial (**Fig.09**).

Jason Wei Che Juan

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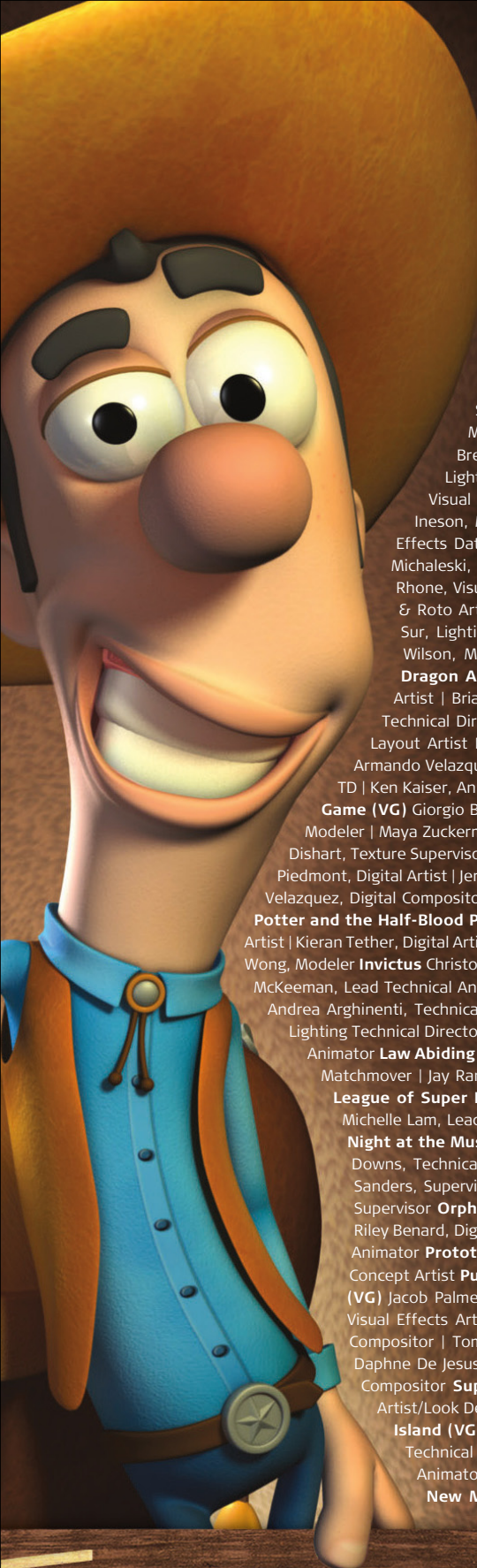
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PHOTOREAL FANTASY GIANT

Chapter 1 | January Issue 061

Griffin

Chapter 2 | This Issue

Giant

Chapter 3 | March Issue 063

Dragon

Chapter 4 | April Issue 064

Yeti

Chapter 5 | May Issue 065

Loch Ness Monster

Chapter 6 | June Issue 066

Alien

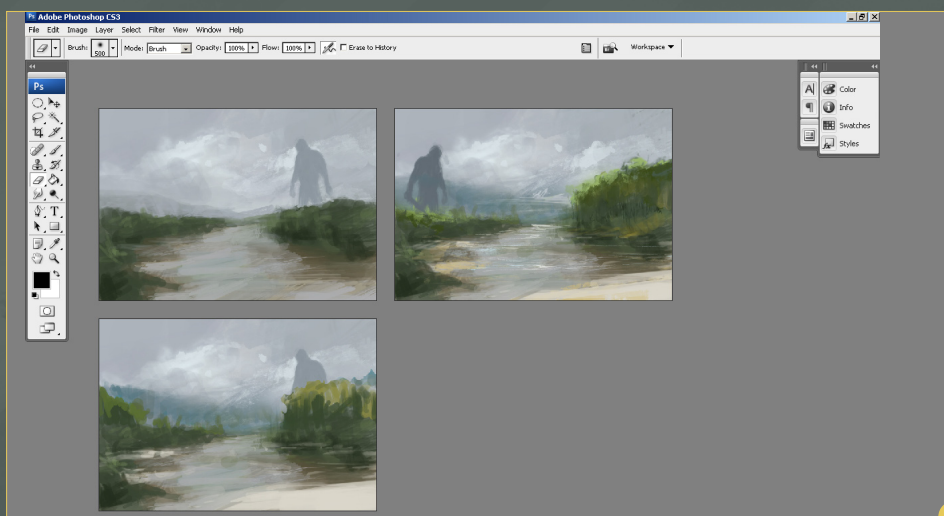
The fantasy genre is hugely popular in the CG industry and has been showcased in hundreds of movies, computer games and artworks over the years. With such potential for magic, monsters and imaginations to run wild, it's easy to see why fantasy is such an attractive subject. But giving fantastical ideas enough of a basis in reality to be convincing can be difficult. In this series our talented artists are going to take one aspect of fantasy – legendary creatures – and show us how they would tackle this problem. Some use photo integration, others paint the creatures very carefully with a steady hand, but all share the benefits of their experience and reveal the tricks and techniques they use to make the unreal seem real.

Photoreal Fantasy - Giant

Software used: Photoshop

Introduction

The aim of this tutorial was to produce an image that looked like a convincing photograph of a creature that does not exist in reality, but perhaps could have resided somewhere in the world. I imagined a scenario in which a rare snapshot has captured a unique glimpse of a mythological creature. Before starting this painting I recalled photos I had seen as a child relating to Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster and their alleged existence. The pictures lacked any real clarity, suggesting they were perhaps hoax photographs. I had already chosen a giant as my topic, but needed to decide on the context and environment. I initially thought about a mountainous habitat and then considered the



01

jungle as this would be a great place to remain elusive and hidden from civilisation.

Thumbnail Sketches

With a jungle theme in mind I started making some small sketches to work out the

composition. I considered a river with a large silhouetted figure strolling across the valley floor, with perhaps some characters in the foreground. **Fig.01** shows a few variations on this theme with the viewer looking down river and catching sight of a wandering giant. I experimented with some sand banks where the characters could be positioned, but somehow the jungle environment did not feel right.

I then considered a misty forest in the foothills of a mountain range where visibility would be restricted and hence make for an ambiguous photo, although this seemed a little clichéd. I began thinking of more unusual environments and the one which seemed less obvious was a desert. This isn't the greatest place to hide but they can be vast and inhospitable, therefore providing a remote environment for a giant to exist away from mankind. I imagined the creature venturing out from his canyon habitat in search of food or water and happening to be caught on camera by an unsuspecting photographer attached to a small party of men.

Blocking In

Fig.02 shows my initial block-in, with the giant striding past a rock formation. I planned on eventually situating the men in the foreground sheltered behind the rock, with the photographer being in the extreme foreground behind the camera. During this stage I built up the image in three distinct layers: the foreground, including



02

the rock and sand, the sky and finally the giant. Keeping these three sections separate meant that each aspect could be modified easily throughout the painting process. Because this task involved creating an image that might be interpreted as a photo it required some actual photographic elements borrowed from a matte painting approach.

Using Photographs

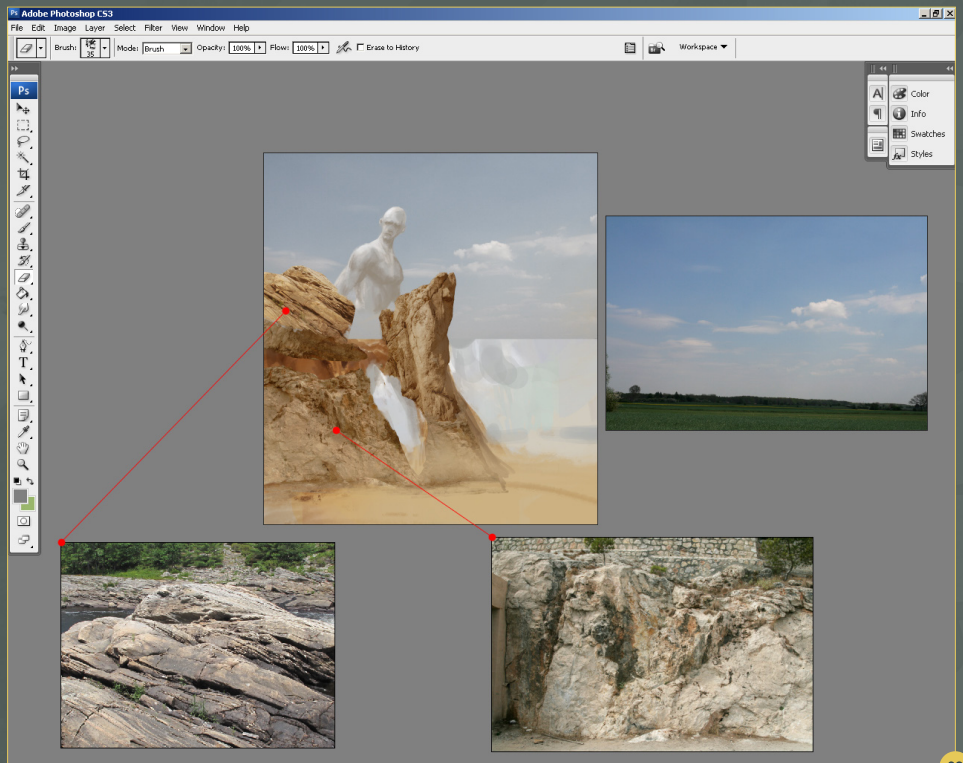
Fig.03 shows a sample of photos I took from 3DTotal's free library: <http://freetextures.3dtotal.com/>. The two rock images can be found under Nature > Rock, with the sky being located under Nature > Skies. The two rock images were color corrected to match and then scaled and rotated to fit the painting. The sky was also desaturated slightly and pasted in behind the giant and foreground.

I found the image of a distant rock outcrop, which I used to add some background scenery (Fig.04): http://freetextures.3dtotal.com/preview.php?imi=8326&s=c:Rural_Environments&p=0&cid=17

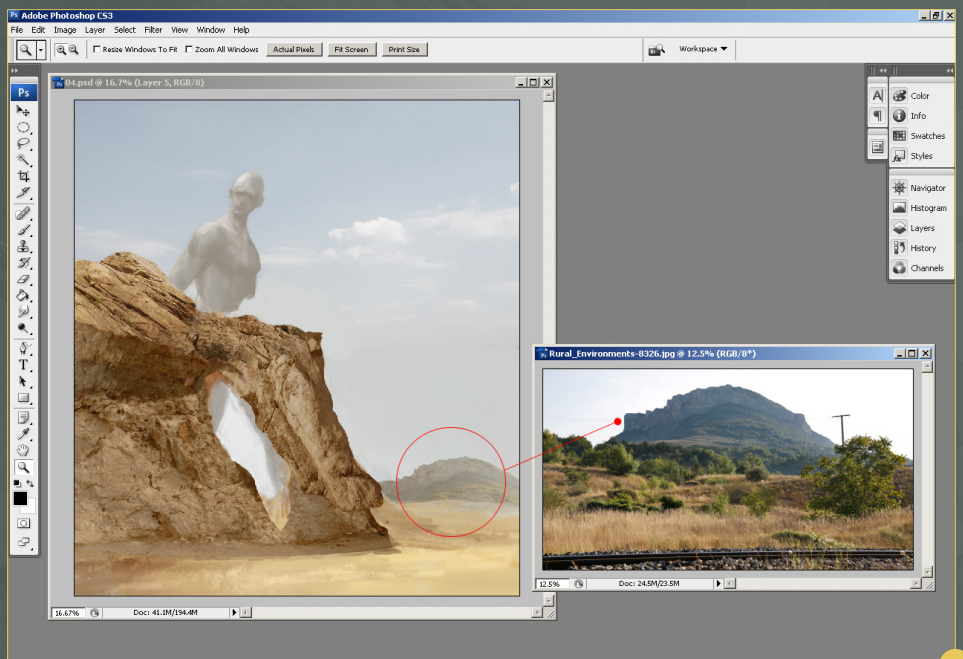
Using further sections of rock I built up the foreground and then pasted in two palm trees from the reference library (Fig.05). The sand in the immediate foreground was built up from three photos, with the two principal ones visible in Fig.06.

When using photographs it is important to color adjust them so that they match closely. My first port of call was Image > Adjustments > Brightness/Contrast, followed by Image > Adjustments > Color Balance. Once the photo elements were in position they were blended together using a combination of the Clone Stamp and Eraser tools.

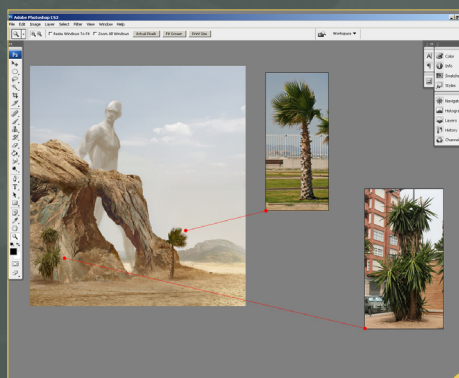
Up until this point I'd only really worked on the foreground area and so it was time to address the giant and add some definition. I found an image of a man wearing some ragged-looking



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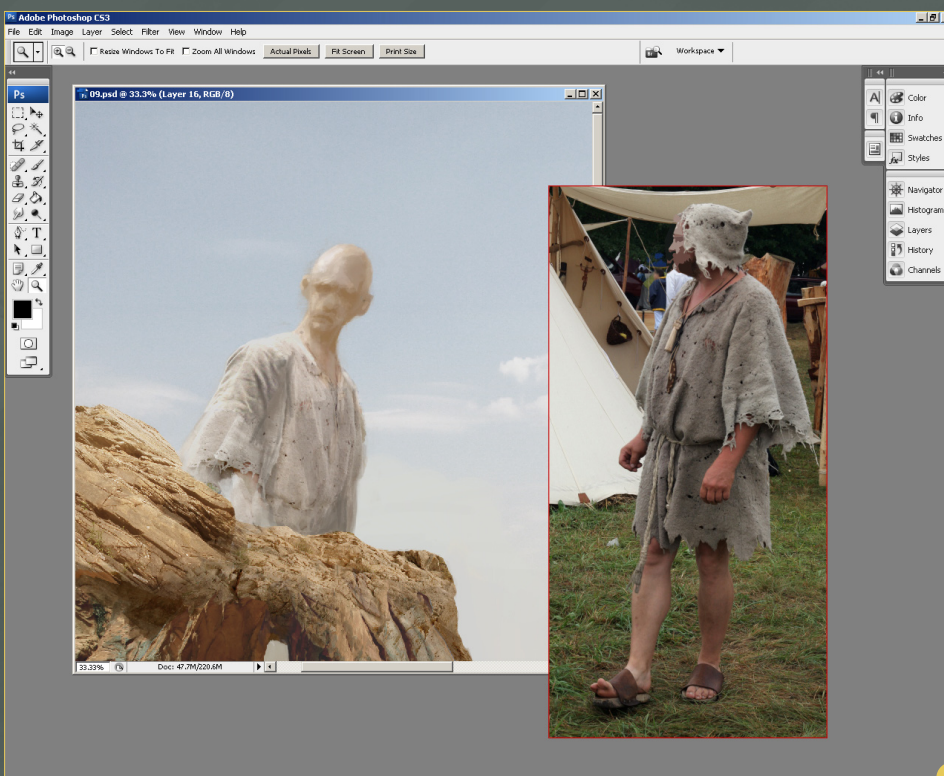
06

clothes in the medieval section of the library and thought this would make an apt reference.

Fig.07 shows the original photo and its new location in the painting. Because the giant is meant to be some distance from the camera I reduced the contrast by way of Image > Adjustments > Curves and then added some highlights across the shoulder to blend him in with the scene lighting.

The scale of the rocky outcrop looked too small compared to the palm trees and so I decided to move this section into the middle distance and re-do the foreground. **Fig.08** shows the new outcrop and the three photos that have been used from the reference library to start building the detail into the giant. You can see that I have made up the arm from two photos, the forearm from one and the hand from another (right inset). The upper arm was extracted from a third one, which you can also see in the lower part. All three images were taken from the Medieval > Civilian section of the library. Whilst browsing through the reference library I came across a German military vehicle and instantly decided to use the theme of warfare and maybe even suggest some bizarre military experiment.

I wanted to set this picture somewhere in the past, as mentioned in the introduction, and having recalled a TV series about World War 2 that was retouched in color, I thought this would be ideal. I imagined this to be a retouched photo from that period, which allowed me to make it look old and therefore suggest a sense of doubt about its authenticity. I promptly pasted



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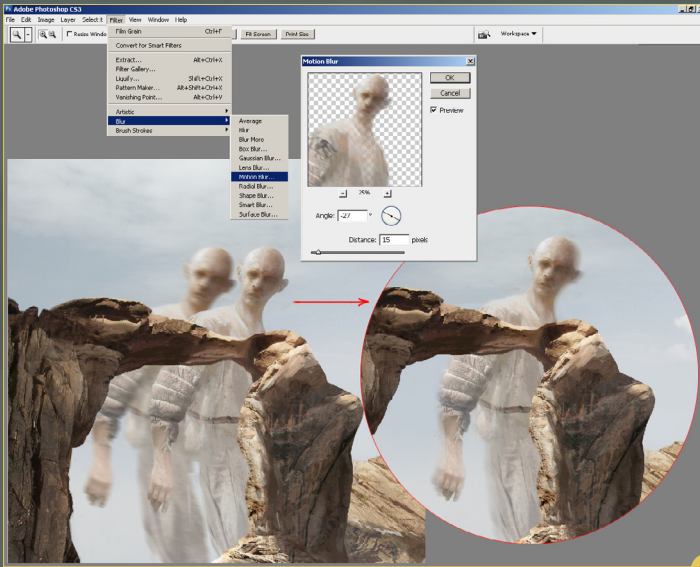
in the vehicle in question and then added in two soldiers in the foreground

The face was roughed in, but given the scale and distance of the character it only really needed to read tonally as opposed to incorporating any real detail. Here is the detail of the giant's head, which you can see is vague and lacking any real clarity (**Fig.09**). This was done in part to raise a question about the authenticity of the eventual image, but

also because he is set in the distance and is obscured by atmospheric perspective.

Bringing Everything Together

At this point all of the crucial components were in the image and it was time to gel everything together and add the final touches. The first thing I needed to do was add some motion blur to the giant as he would be taking large strides across the landscape. To do this I duplicated the layer and went to Filter > Blur > Motion Blur.



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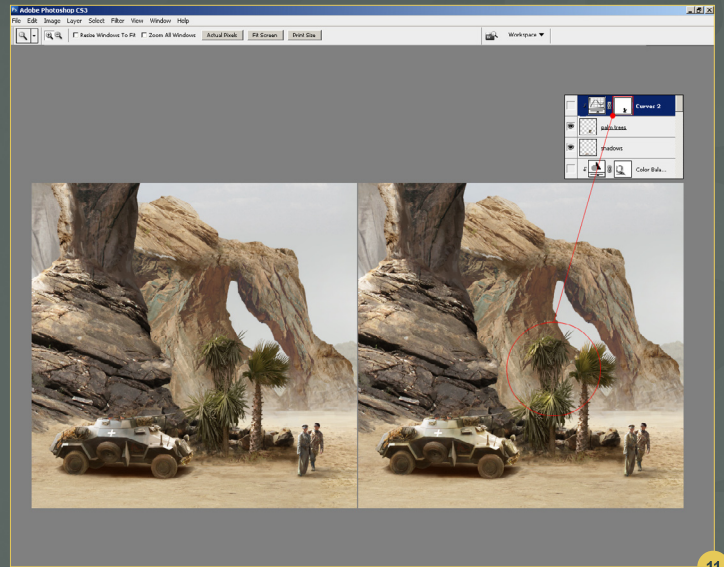
I then reduced the opacity to around 50% and rotated it slightly (**Fig.10**).

I didn't want to blur him completely, but rather focus on the areas that were moving the most, such as the arm and head.

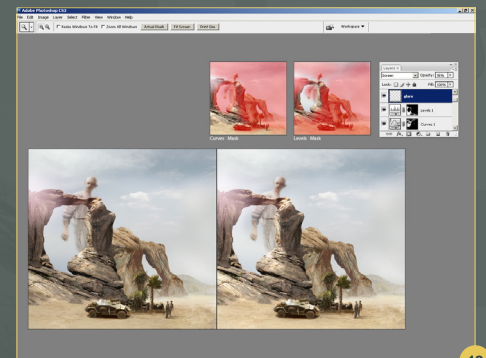
I repositioned the soldiers and vehicle and then added a Curves > Adjustment Layer to add some highlights to the palm trees (**Fig.11**). This is done by going to Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Curves. After this I adjusted the curves to make the trees lighter. I then used black to

paint into the mask (see highlighted thumbnail) to restrict the highlights to just the left sides. You will also notice that I added some dust to the vehicle and soldiers courtesy of a new layer of color set to Overlay.

I added two new adjustment layers – Curves and Levels – in order to add a brighter light into the image. Once applied, I painted into the masks to control the effect as well as painting in some sun glare (**Fig.12**).



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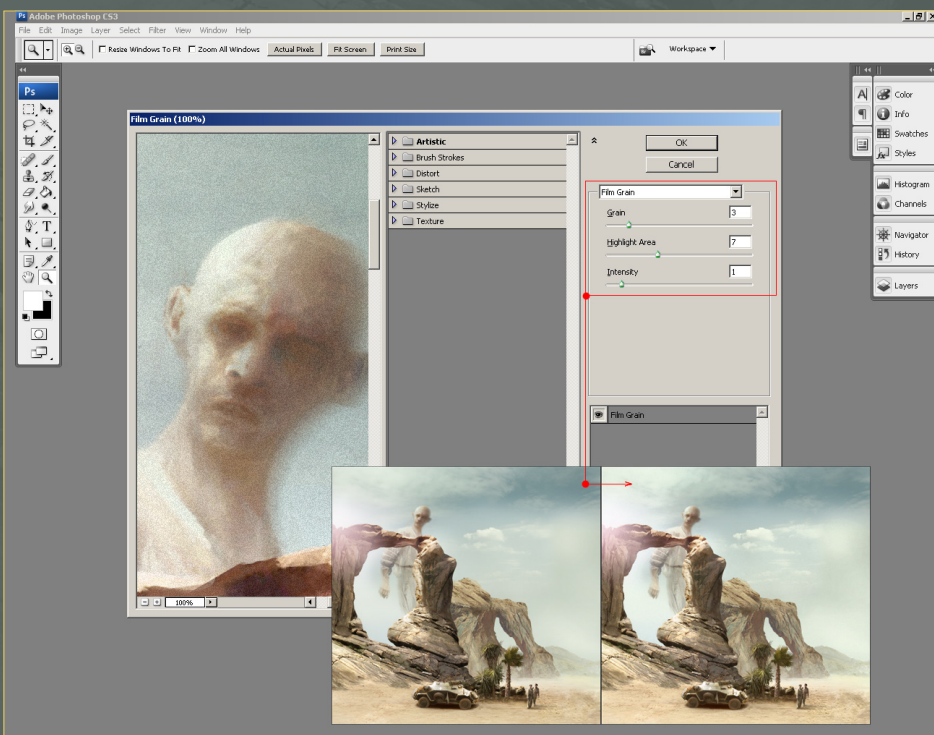


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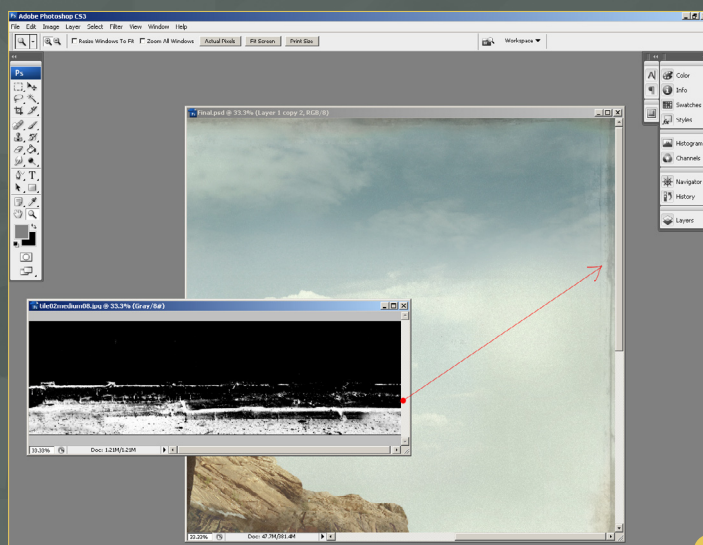
Image Adjustments and Filters

At this stage I flattened the layers and then applied a Film Grain filter (Filter > Artistic > Film Grain), as seen in **Fig.13**. I then used some dirt maps to add an edge around the image akin to old photographs. I inverted the map, moved and scaled it accordingly and then set the opacity to around 40% (**Fig.14**).

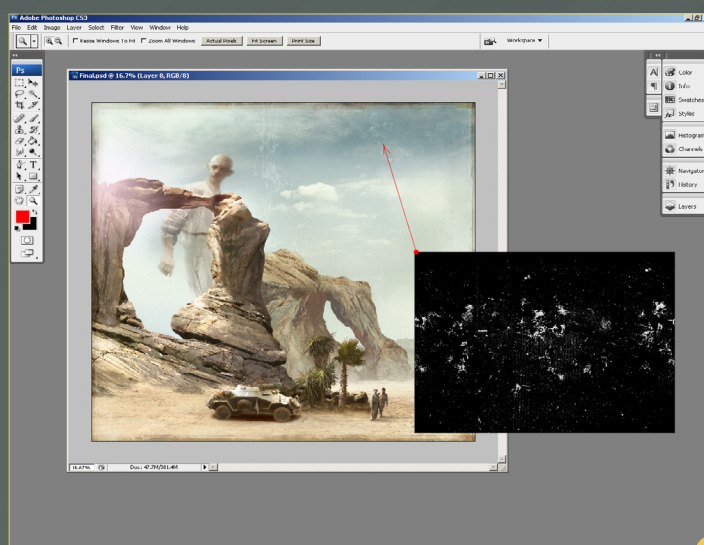
To add some scratches and imperfections I sampled other dirt maps and set the blending mode to Color Dodge at 80% opacity (**Fig.15**). To add some color tinting that will help give it that retouched quality, I applied another dirt map, which I partially erased and then set to Soft Light at 60% opacity (**Fig.16_1**). I then applied a Photo Filter, which can be found under Image Adjustments; in this case a Warming Filter. This essentially balances the light and adds a warm yellow tint, which helped to age the image (**Fig.16_2**).



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14



15

The third adjustment I made was courtesy of Image > Adjustments > Exposure. I used this to add a further contrast, which is often a quality seen in older photographs where there is a slight overexposure (**Fig.16_3**).

Perhaps the last key aspect to add for a little more authenticity was a vignette – a feature of early photography caused by lens limitations or deliberate camera settings. To do this I created a new layer and filled it with white. You then need to go to Filter > Distort > Lens Correction and reduce the Vignette amount (**Fig.17**). Once done, this layer can be set to Multiply blending mode and voila!

With this last adjustment the image is complete – a color retouched photo from another era capturing a rare glimpse of a giant as he strides through the deep desert.

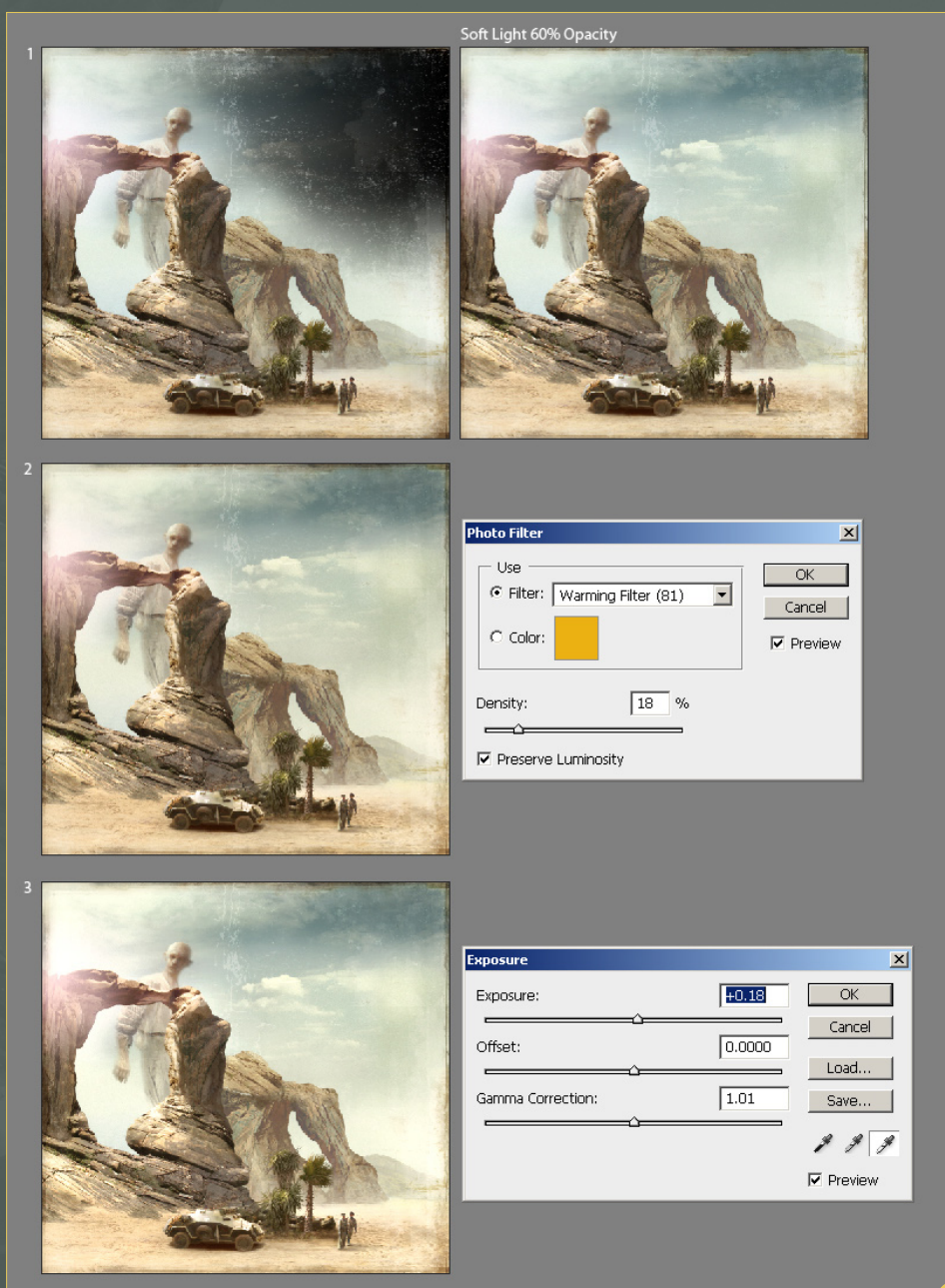
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**“It is important to get
the correct levels of
dark in the shadow
and show how the
skin reflects the
light.”**

Portrait

Yuehui Tang is a fantastic artist and has a great way of painting portraits. In this Making Of he shows us how he painted his image “Portrait” by starting with a black page, adding the light and soft tones to create a grayscale image, and then painting over it.

Making of Portrait

Software used: Photoshop

When I began this illustration I didn't really think about what to draw. I simply started by building up the light in what seemed to be a sensible order. I did, however, need to concentrate at this point as it was my aim to establish the forehead, cheekbones, jaw and anywhere else that might catch the light (**Fig.01**).

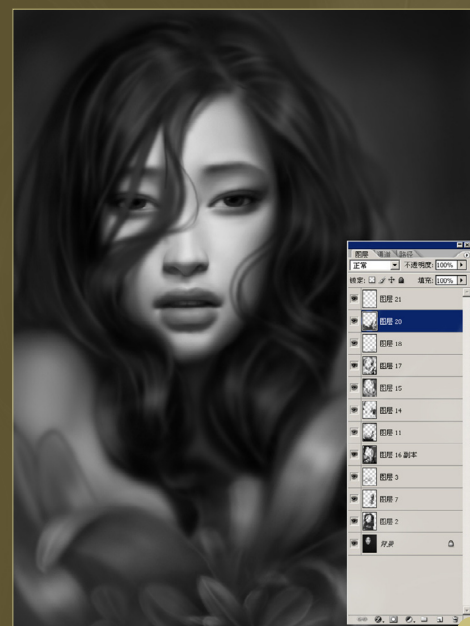
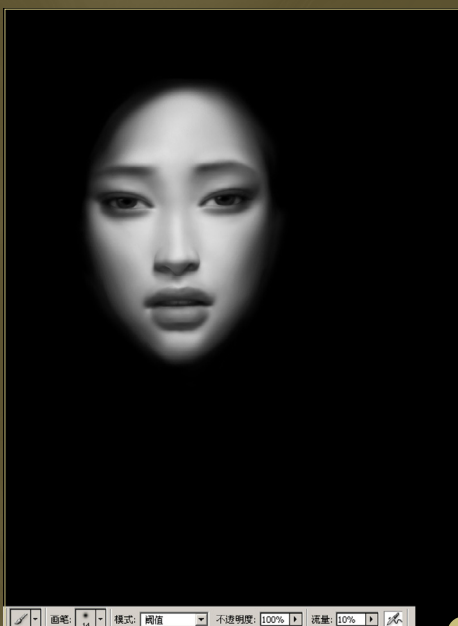
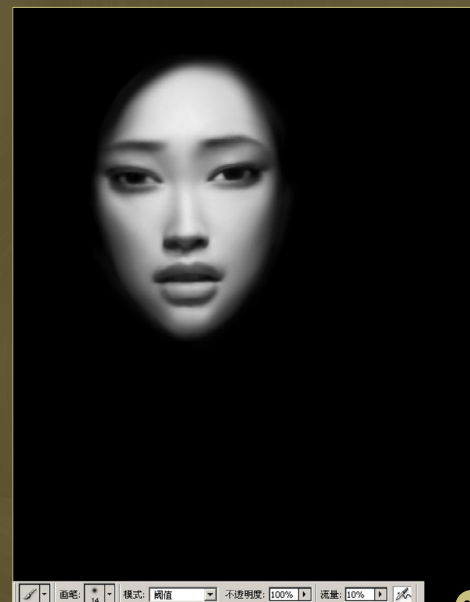
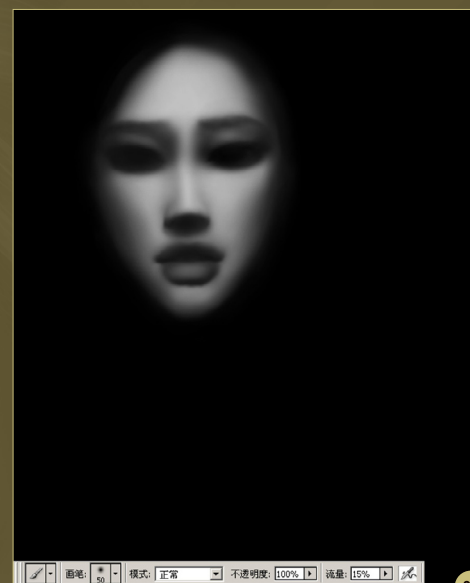
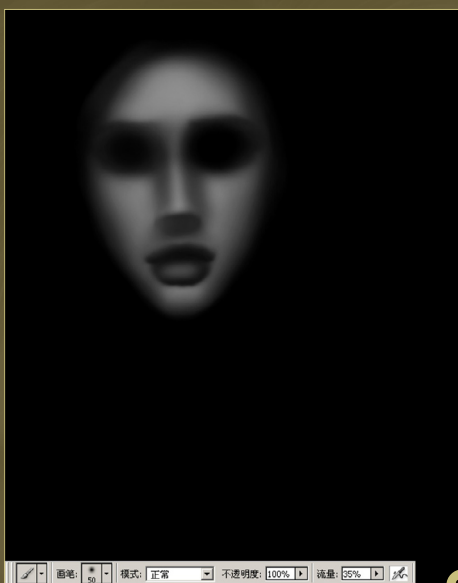
I continued to add to the areas that reflected light and defined the image according to my understanding of women's faces. I find that it is easier to keep things clean without the specific features being involved (**Fig.02**).

This is the first point where I started to detail any of the facial features. I usually deal with these whilst the image still has a hazy effect (**Fig.03**).

I then reduced the size of the brush to help me start doing the detail. It is important to pay attention to the expression of the eyes and mouth. I was trying to make the face look calm (**Fig.04**).

In **Fig.05** you can see that I was now happy with the look of the face and started to move onto the rest of the detail. You can notice that I opened the mouth as I thought that it went better with the slightly hazy eyes. I also added some highlights to the eyes. To make the subject of your image seem soft and mellow, a good technique is to limit the impact of the bones - in particularly the cheek bones.

I then started to add more layers to start working on the hair and other features in the image. From this point I was able to revisit all of the layers and develop the most suitable feelings to portray on the face. When I was totally satisfied I merged the layers so I only had one layer for the face, one for the hair and one for everything else in the scene (**Fig.06**).





07

One I had finished and was satisfied with the base layers it was time to move on to the color. Firstly I added a layer over the image and then added further colors to select areas (**Fig.07**). If you were then to turn the layer mode to Color you would get something along these lines. The Color layer can get a little messy, which is an obvious drawback so I would suggest changing the blending mode to Overlay and adjusting it until you are happy.

The next step was to detail the rest of the image, starting with the hair. From this point



08

onwards I made a lot of small adjustments, starting with the face. It is important to get the correct levels of dark in the shadow and show how the skin reflects the light. I made sure that the levels of light and dark made the skin look slightly transparent. I then continued to give the image depth by intensifying the shadowed areas and distinguishing between the different areas such as the face and hair, and the hair and the background.

As you can see, it was a case of building on the image layer by layer and at this point I found it



09

necessary to concentrate on the highlights as this helped to enforce the feeling of volume, particularly in the hair. I had to remember that the highlights and the shadow needed to be considered together, as the lighter the highlights are the darker the shadow seems. It is always important to remember the contrast (**Fig.08**).

I continued to paint the hair carefully and then started to focus on the eyes and lips. It was important to show that these are reflective by using strong, carefully-placed highlights. At the same time I thought it was important to strengthen the shadows around the face (**Fig.09**).

I constantly added to the face, mainly adding to the light and shadow. It is important to look at the full image at this point to get a better idea of how the image is developing, so the image as a whole can be adjusted. The next step was also to start to add some feathers. The technique I used was to draw one feather and then copy it and adjust it in the different locations. I did this over about four layers, which also contained the light and shadow (**Fig.10**).

I thought that the hair still needed further work so I increased the hardness of the brush and decreased its size (**Fig.11a**). I also changed the



10



11a

brush Jitter and Flow control to "Pressure". It was very important to make sure that the hair didn't look flat by varying its thickness and transparency. You can see the brushes I used in **Fig.11b**.

I then continue to paint the arms and neck. I also identified the parts of the hair that needed work and strengthened them by adding to the effect of light and shadow (**Fig.12**).

The hair was continuously developed and at this point I made new layers to make adjustments as I didn't want to adjust what I had. I also added eyelashes here (**Fig.13 - 14**).

In this final step I adjusted the colors. You will also notice that birds were added. I also went back into a few layers to tweak things a little (**Fig.15**).



11b



12



13



14

Yuehui Tang

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2010.4.17.

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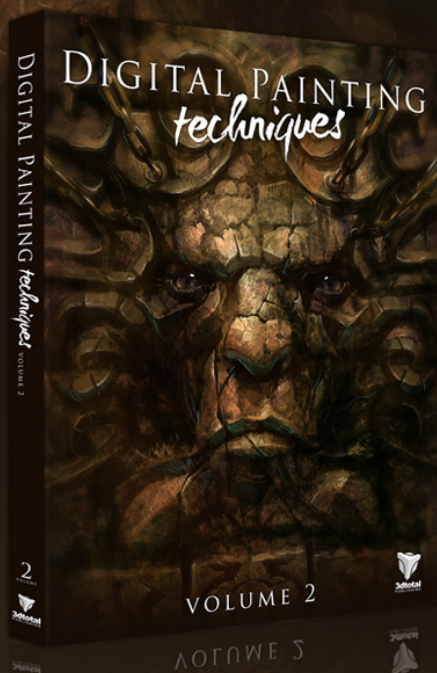
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This month we feature:

"COWBOY VS SANDWORMS"

BY KEKAI KOTAKI





COWBOY VS. SANDWORMS

BY KEKAI KOTAKI

JOB TITLE: Concept Art Lead – ArenaNet

SOFTWARE USED: Photoshop



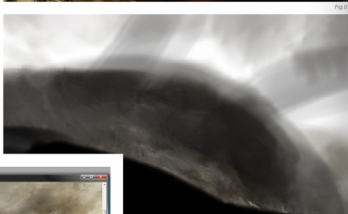
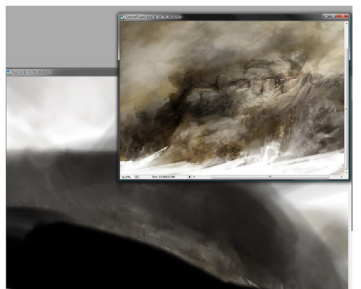
INTRODUCTION

I like to give myself little side projects when my schedule is open. This gives me the chance to do things that I enjoy and at the same time get some practice in too. Also, being able to update my blog is always a plus.

The piece Cowboy Vs. Sandworms started out as a little speed paint that I liked to call Cowboy Vs. Sandworm: get it? – there's only one. (Fig.01)

Lame joke, I know, but that is the last one ... maybe. Anyway, after looking at it I really wanted to push it further and actually get a good piece out of this concept. Something I could put in my portfolio and submit to publications. Cowboys are awesome and everyone loves sandworms. Slamming the two together seemed like the next logical step.

“ HAVING A STRONG DIRECTION TO FOLLOW RIGHT AT THE START SOLVES MANY OF THE PROBLEMS THAT MAY APPEAR TOWARDS THE END OF A PIECE ”



STARTING OUT

When starting a piece I like to work in black and white. Grays naturally begin to occur too. I like to get the composition started as soon as possible. Having a strong direction to follow right at the start solves many of the problems that may appear towards the end of a piece (Fig.02).

To help me out I like to add in texture layers. These are things I paint that can be placed anywhere and which I like to keep because I can use them again (Fig.03). I generally like to set these layers to Soft Light.

SIDE THOUGHT

One of the reasons I like sandworms is because they are simple shapes. They help me to practice getting

movement into my compositions because at their core that's what they are: big shapes swooping across the page.

SANDWORM

Here, I have already settled on where the sandworms are positioned (Fig.04).

Although still rough, I was pleased with their general placement. I now tried to figure out what kind of details they would have. I knew that the sandworm's mouth was going to be the one place where I could really design something. Should I go for the standard “Dune” or something a little different? I went with a spiky-headed sandworm. I chose to use a smudge brush during this time as it allowed me to get a broad “arty” stroke really quickly.

DETAILS

Fig.05 shows the stage at which I was rendering and putting in additional details. At the same time I tried to





Fig.06 shows where I have used the same trick touched upon earlier, using an old painting that is layered over the top to create some textural detail.

“THE CLOSER THE ELEMENT IS TO THE CAMERA, THE MORE DETAIL IT RECEIVES. IT IS JUST ONE OF MANY TRICKS AND NOT A HARD RULE TO FOLLOW”

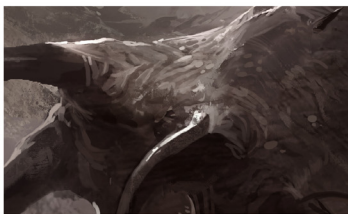


Fig.07 shows a close up of the main sandworm. It shows the level of detail, or lack thereof, that I go for in my images. The closer the element is to the camera, the more detail it receives. It is just one of many tricks and not a hard rule to follow.

COWBOY

When I reached this point I realized that I needed a stage for my cowboy to be able to run with the sandworms. Looking back on my original sketch (see Fig.01), I did not feel quite satisfied with the big black shape in the foreground (see Fig.05).

This is when I started to add a slope to the piece (Fig.08).

I also added some more lighting to the scene at this point. Getting a cool bounce light off the ground really added some drama to a piece and it also gave me a chance to use a hot spot on the ground, which could be further used to highlight the cowboy. I also started to add color to the piece during this phase, using layers set to Soft Light and Lighten, which are favorites of mine. I also used Color Balance to shift the entire piece into color and out of the gray zone it had been in until now.



Side note: If you haven't already noticed, I knew where I wanted to put the cowboy. This may seem kind of weird, in that I like to block out things beforehand. However, because I was using that first sketch as a starting point, I knew where I wanted to go with it. At this stage I could basically see the cowboy in the piece. It was one more element just waiting to appear. Up until this point I'd just been setting everything up just right.

“DRAWING AND PAINTING A HORSE IS HARD ENOUGH, BUT INCLUDING A RIDER JUST ADDS TO THE PAIN”

COWBOY 2

The cowboy finally arrived at this point (Fig.09).

I started rough and just kept on going until something looked right. Having reference pictures of people riding horses to hand helps a ton. Drawing and painting a horse is hard enough, but including a rider just adds to the pain. Also, I hadn't really painted the final lighting into the scene yet. I was just using generic lighting at this point, trying to get things to look right. The dynamic lighting



came later, when I was comfortable with what I had. You can see the different brush strokes and the roughness in the close up shown in Fig.10. Even though I was rough I tried to make sure each stroke counted so that I wasn't just making a mess.

“BY UNDERSTANDING THE ELEMENTS I WANTED TO PLAY WITH I WAS ABLE TO GET A SENSE OF MOVEMENT AND DIRECTION”

FINAL

Here I added the final touches. At the end I like to tweak certain things such as the color and contrast. I try to make sure things stand out and “pop” in the final piece. I also dropped the main sandworm back so that it rested firmly on its own in the space in the piece. Having the dusty clouds in there sort of blended the two together, taking away some of the scale of the sandworm. Adding a shadow to the cowboy helped emphasize the highlights around him. The final thing I did was to smudge some tall grass into the foreground to add some interest there (Fig.11).



CONCLUSION, ENDING, ETC. ... This was an exercise in trying to create an exciting composition. Using and being aware of the components involved with the piece helped immensely. By understanding the elements I wanted to play with I was able to get a sense of movement and direction. I was also able to establish lighting that helped convey depth and scale and, in the end, I was able to draw a cowboy riding with some sandworms.



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:VOLUME 5

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